

A VARIETY OF SHORT STORIES



CHILDREN'S STORIES

Categorized by Title

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3	Bible Tells Me So, The	10	Obedience
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5	Boy and His Spare Moments	13	Diligence
6	Boy Who Took a Boarder	14	Compassionate, Considerateness, Generosity, Hospitable
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9	Coals of Fire	21	Forbearance, Forgiveness, Kindness
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19	Honoring Your Parents Through Obedience	34	Obedience, Respectfulness
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22	How Much Land?	37	Moderation
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39	Sheep and Pig Who Built a House, The	71	Cooperativeness, Corporateness,
40	Spider, The	72	Carefulness, Foresightedness,

			Obedience, Righteousness
41	Stumped	73	Obedience, Openness, Truthfulness
42	Temptation, The	74	Compassion, Foresightedness, Obedience, Wisdom
43	Tempting Gloves, The	76	Honesty, Strictness
44	Two Gardens, The	78	Genuineness, Kindness
45	Ungrateful Daughter, The	80	Diligence, Forbearance, Gratefulness, Humbleness, Responsibility
46	Wanderer's Prayer, The	81	Obedience, Respectfulness
47	What a Mess!	82	Diligence, Tidiness
48	What is God like?	84	Loving, Obedience
49	Wise as Solomon	85	Fairness, Honesty, Wisdom

CHILDREN'S STORIES

Categorized by Character Points

#	CHARACTER POINTS	STORY TITLE
1	Broad Heartedness	Rose's Revenge
2	Carefulness	Always the Bible
		Hard Way, The
		Spider, The
3	Considerateness	Boy Who Took in a Boarder
4	Contentedness	Cracked Pot, The
5	Cooperativeness	Sheep and Pig Who Built a House, The
6	Corporateness	Sheep and Pig Who Built a House, The
7	Compassion	Boy Who Took in a Boarder
		Temptation, The
8	Courage	Courage and Cowardice
9	Courteousness	Larry Dean's References
10	Deepness	Burned Without Fire
11	Diligence	Booker T. Washington
		Boy and His Spare Moments
		Ungrateful Daughter, The
		What a Mess!
12	Exactness	Burned Without Fire
		Ronnie the Rope Climber
		Sensitive Plant, The
13	Fairness	Wise as Solomon
14	Faith	Burned Without Fire
15	Faithfulness	Hachiko, the Faithful Dog
		Mysterious Ride, The
16	Forgiveness	Burnt Composition, The
		Coals of Fire
		Joe Benton's Coals of Fire
		Doll that Grew, The
		Rose's Revenge
17	Forbearance	Courage and Cowardice
		Joe Benton's Coals of Fire
		Ungrateful Daughter, The
		Coals of Fire
18	Foresightedness	Temptation, The
		Spider, The
19	Generosity	Boy Who Took in a Boarder
20	Genuineness	Larry Dean's References
		Two Gardens, The
21	Gratefulness	Cracked Pot, The
		Honoring Your Parents Through Thankfulness
		Larry Dean's References
		Mysterious Rider, The
		Ungrateful Daughter
22	Honesty	Dishonesty
		Hot Stone, The

		Hard Way, The
		My First Theft
		Ronny the Rope Climber
		Seventeen Cowards
		Tempting Gloves, The
		Wise as Solomon
23	Hospitable	Boy Who Took in a Boarder
24	Humility	Humble Hero, A
		Lion and the Mouse, The
		Richard's Rubbish Heap
		Ungrateful Daughter, The
25	Kindness	Aunt Jane's Party
		Burnt Composition, The
		Coals of Fire
		Conductor's Mistake, The
		Count and the Dove, The
		Doll that Grew, The
		Into the Sunshine
		Joe Benton's Coals of Fire
		Joe Green's Lunch
		Larry Dean's References
		Lion and the Mouse, The
		Sensitive Plant, The
		Two Gardens, The
26	Loving	What is God Like?
27	Magnanimity	Joe Green's Lunch
28	Mercifulness	Lion and the Mouse, The
29	Meekness	Aunt Jane's Party
30	Moderation	How Much Land?
31	Obedience	Bible Tells Me So, The
		Honoring Your Parents Through Obedience
		Little Lily's Good Time
		One Minute More
		Spider, The
		Stumped
		Temptation, The
		Wanderer's Prayer, The
		What is God Like?
32	Openness	Into the Sunshine
		Stumped
33	Perseverance	Booker T. Washington
		Perseverance
		Richard's Rubbish Heap
		Ronny the Rope Climber
34	Politeness	Aunt Jane's Party
35	Promptness	One Minute More
36	Respectfulness	Conductor's Mistake, The
		Honoring Your Parents Through Obedience
		Honoring Your Parents Through Thankfulness

		Honor Your Parents That it May Be Well With You
		Larry Dean's References
		Little Lily's Good Time
		Sensitive Plant, The
		Ungrateful Daughter, The
		Wanderer's Prayer, The
37	Responsibility	Hard Way, The
		Ungrateful Daughter, The
38	Righteousness	Courage and Cowardice
		Spider, The
39	Strictness	One Minute More
		Tempting Gloves, The
40	Tidiness	What a Mess!
41	Truthfulness	Hard Way, The
		Hot Stone, The
		Mysterious Rider, The
		Seventeen Cowards
		Stumped
42	Wisdom	Temptation, The
		Wise as Solomon

ALWAYS THE BIBLE

"ALWAYS the Bible!" said Horace Cooper to his sister. "Aren't you tired of it?"

"Almost," said Marian, laughing; "But still not *quite* as indignant as a boy not far off."

"Here we came down into the country to enjoy ourselves for the holidays, and instead of that-"

"Now, Horace," interrupted his sister, "I am sure you have had lots of fun. There were rides and Uncle's amusing stories of his travels. There were luncheons in the arbor and walks with Charles and Fanny. Come now, I can't let you find fault with *everything*."

"Perhaps not; but remember that on the excursion we had to sing a hymn under the trees, and to listen to a Psalm."

"Yes, the sixty-fifth," said Marian.

"Well, and then in those stories of travel, Uncle brings the same Book forward constantly. In the arbor don't we sing hymns and read verse by verse. In our walks, Charles and Fanny learn memory verses and ask us to do the same."

"So it is," returned the sister. "I confess that at first the reading and prayers, morning and evening, appeared strange; but now I begin to like it. Anyway, I do not wish myself back at Uncle Herbert's as I did the first day or two."

Horace and Marian Cooper were orphans under the guardianship of the "Uncle Herbert" of whom we have heard them speak. When about ten years of age, they had been sent to boarding schools in the city. A few summers after this we find them spending a vacation with "Uncle Loxicy down in Cornwall," as Horace always called him.

A beautiful place was Femley, as Mr. Loxley's place was called. The house had ivied walls, surrounded by gardens.

That evening in the cheerful drawing room at Femly, Mrs. Loxley, Marian, Fanny, Charles, and Horace awaited the arrival of Mr. Loxley. Charles has discovered that there is a particularly interesting story for this evening, and even Master Horace was ready to listen and applaud. At length Mr. Loxley entered and took his armchair.

"Bertha," he said, addressing his wife, "I have a long letter to read to you. What is the matter, Fanny? How crestfallen you look, my child! and Marian, too!"

"O Father, it's our story; we thought you would begin now."

"Oh, I see!" There was a merry twinkle in Mr. Loxley's eye as Charles explained the downcast looks. "I see," continued the man with assumed gravity, "the letter will have the goodness to wait awhile."

Everyone smiled assent. Mr. Loxley cleared his throat and the "story" began. "When I was a boy..."

Everyone looked up.

"Well, then, I will choose some less antiquated beginning. The snow lay thick on Salisbury Plain as I rode home from school on the top of a stagecoach. Dark and dismal was the night, not a star to be seen. It was such a night as would suit the adventurous Master Horace yonder. The coach was heavily laden, and the horses—we had six of them—could scarcely drag us over the road."

"Presently the guard whispered to a gentleman at his side: 'Shan't get through this without some mishap;' and, at the same instant, down went the coach in the deep snow. The passengers dismounted, the horses struggled nobly and still it was evident that, without more horses, the coach could not move. A conference was held, and it was resolved that the larger number of the passengers, with the guard, should proceed to the nearest village and send help immediately."

"But how could they find the way?"

"Hush, I am going to tell you. There was one man on the coach who knew 'every step of the road,' and, with a lantern in his hand, this man, looking at the waymarks which he so well knew, was to guide us to the village."

"That was great," said Horace, who was all attention.

"This man was called *Guidewell*, and an honest guide he was. In our company, hastening with us over Salisbury Plain, was a self-conceited man, *Mr. Careless* I shall call him, who never appealed to our guide. As for the rest of us, we followed Mr. Guidewell carefully. By and by Mr. Careless said: 'Why do you trust to this man? I believe I know the best way after all.'"

"Have you ever been on this road before?" I asked, with schoolboy forwardness.

"Why, not exactly; but I'm tired of hearing your constant appeals to Mr. Guidewell. I wonder if you will join me to strike off to the left and find the way as best we can."

"Oh, how foolish!" cried Fanny.

"That's silly," cried Horace. "When one has a guide who knows the way, surely no one would go off alone and be lost!"

Mr. Loxley looked grave. "In vain we argued with him; in vain we called our guide and questioned him as to the safety of such a course. Mr. Guidewell asserted that the path that he pointed out was the only safe course; but Mr. Careless shook himself away, saying, 'Always this Guidewell, I'm tired of him.'"

"Uncle, the man must have been mad!"

"Was he ever heard from again?" asked Charles.

Mr. Loxley still looked grave. "You are wrong," he said; "for, happily, some of the words which Mr. Guidewell uttered made a deep impression on the mind of Careless, and before he had walked a hundred yards, he returned and acknowledged his mistakes."

All brightened at this unexpected conclusion, and during the next five minutes the children expressed their opinions of the story.

"But father hasn't finished," suggested Fanny presently.

"Well, perhaps I should tell you that we reached the village in safety, and that the coach was soon out of the hole. The part of my story I want to impress on your memories is the adventure of Mr. Careless."

There was a pause, and then Mr. Loxley, in his kindest manner, said: "Horace, my boy, come here." Horace obeyed. "And Marian." Marian came to the other side. Their uncle took a hand of each.

"This morning," said Mr. Loxley, "I accidentally heard these words in my garden: 'Always the Bible; aren't you tired of it?'"

"I stayed to hear no more; but I told you this story to help you. If a man refuse to be guided by the Bible, if he choose *his own path*, what shall be said of him? Will not the words uttered a moment ago express it: 'How foolish?'"

The brother and sister chose God's word for their guide, and the motto of their lives was: "*Always the Bible.*"

AUNT JANE'S PARTY

Almost everyone in town knew Aunt Jane. She was aunt to a dozen or more boys and girls in particular, and to all the rest in general. Aunt Jane bestowed a great deal of care and thought on her relatives, and all the time they did not claim was devoted to helping others. It was a wonder to all how she accomplished so much. She kept house by herself in a quiet way, yet not exactly alone. Children and poor persons not happy at home sought her home, where they were sure to receive sympathy in all their troubles.

Well, I had almost forgotten that I was going to tell you about Aunt Jane's party.

She was always doing "something queer," as the people called it; but, for all that, everyone loved her and approved of everything she did. Now, the party was to be on Wednesday afternoon, and the invitations were given out several days before.

Some children who had no brothers or sisters felt quite slighted because they were not invited, for she invited by pairs, but only two from any one family, even if there were a dozen children. The children's parents thought it a strange thing to do, but said there was probably a reason, if Aunt Jane did it that way.

The long-expected day arrived. There were about twenty boys and girls at the party. They played games and had exciting contests.

After the refreshments, the children were invited to look at colored pictures through a viewer that enlarged the pictures. Only one child could see the pictures at a time. The *first* boy rushed eagerly toward the chair, fearing that someone would be there before him. The rough push he gave his sister hurt her, and she, provoked by it, pulled his hair.

The last to see the pictures were a brother and sister named Charles and Mary Ellis, ten and eight years old. Charles and his sister had waited patiently until the last. Then, seeing that it was their turn, Charles placed the chair in the best light, and said: "Now, Mary, it is your turn."

"Oh, no!" she said. "You look first. I am in no hurry."

Someone by their side said: "You may take it home and look at it as long as you like."

Looking up, the brother and sister saw Aunt Jane smiling at them. "I had intended to give a present to every brother and sister who did not get provoked with each other," she said; "but I have watched all of you, and have noticed that Charles and Mary Ellis are the only ones who have not shown signs of selfishness. This present is a reward for your kindness. Do you think I have given it to the two who are most deserving?"

"Yes, yes!" they all exclaimed. We hope they resolved to treat each other more kindly in the future.

THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO!

***"Jesus loves me, this I know
For the Bible tells me so."***

Mae was singing her favorite song as she played happily on the doorstep. Suddenly she stopped singing, and sat quietly thinking. "Mother!" she called in a few moments. "May I have a needle and thread?"

"Why, yes, dear! But what do you want a needle and thread for?"

"Oh, I have to sew!" Mae answered.

A little later mother peeped at her daughter busy with her sewing, her little fingers clumsily trying to do their best. As she worked she was still singing her song to herself,

***"Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so."***

"You are such a busy little girl today," Mother said, smiling.

"Yes, I am," answered Mae. "I have to sew because the Bible tells me sew," and she sang the line of her song to explain it to her mother.

Are you smiling as you read of Mae's mistake? I wonder if we are as anxious to do what the Bible tells us to do as Mae was, even though she was mistaken?

The Bible tells: me so!"

What are some of the things the Bible tells me?

"Seek Jehovah while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near," Isa. 55:6.

"...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved..." Acts 16:31.

For boys and girls who are saved, it says many things,

"Draw near to God;"

"Keep yourself pure."

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord."

"In everything give thanks," and many other things.

When you sing "Jesus loves me" again, remember little Mae who was so eager to do what the Bible told her to do!

**"Jesus loves me, this I know
For the Bible tells me so!
Little ones to Him belong,
They are weak, but He is strong**

**Yes, Jesus loves me,
Yes, Jesus loves me,
Yes, Jesus loves me,
The Bible tells me so!"**

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

A slack hand causes poverty, But the hand of the diligent makes rich. Proverbs 10:4
The hand of the diligent will rule, But the slothful will be under forced labor. Proverbs 12:24

A willingness to work and to stick to a job until it's done are qualities of a diligent person. This kind of steady work, combined with a love for his fellowman, made Booker T. Washington great. As you will discover, however, he did not have an easy road to travel.

It is hard to realize that there were slaves in the United States not much more than 140 years ago. It's true, however, and Booker T. Washington was one of them.

Born about 1856, Booker lived in a small log cabin. There was no glass in the windows. The door was too small for the hole in which it swung on rusty hinges. The cabin had no floor but the earth. The "storecupboard" for sweet potatoes was a deep hole in the living room, covered with boards. One of the walls had a hole about seven inches square, to let the cat pass in and out during the night. But since there were lots of other holes in the stack, Booker thought this one was unnecessary.

When Booker was a little boy, he never had time to play. He was always cleaning up, running errands, or taking water to the men in the fields. If he didn't do things exactly right, he was slapped and beaten by those in charge.

Booker was still a small boy when Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves. He remembered going to the "Big House," as the white people's mansion was called. Booker listened as somebody read a paper to all the slaves who had gathered there. He didn't understand what it was all about, but Mother did. She kept crying and saying, "This is the day I have been praying for, but feared I would never see."

Free at last, Booker and his mother left the plantation. They walked over the mountains into West Virginia and settled in a village called Maiden. But freedom didn't mean a life of ease. To Booker it meant working in a salt furnace from four in the morning till late in the afternoon.

Booker did not go to school. There were no schools in West Virginia that Black boys and girls could attend. But, oh, how Booker wanted to read! He begged his mother to get him a book. Somehow, though she was very poor, she managed to buy an old, worn copy of Webster's spelling book. Little by little Booker taught himself the alphabet. After a few weeks he found himself reading that spelling book with the same enjoyment you might find reading a book from the library.

Eventually a little school was started in Maiden. Booker had to work from 4:00 a.m. until 9:00 a.m. before he could leave for school. Then, after school, he worked for two more hours. But Booker was so eager to learn he did not complain. On the first day of school, Booker ran into an unexpected problem.

"What's your name?" the teacher asked.

"Booker," he replied.

"Booker what?" asked the teacher.

Booker was puzzled. He had only one name, so far as he knew. He had never heard of another. However, if he was supposed to have two, he would invent one. "Booker Washington," he said. He added the "T" later. (It stands for Taliaferro, a name his mother liked.)

But times got worse for Booker's family. Jobs were scarce, and wages were low. Soon Booker had to leave his beloved school and go to work in a coal mine. It was a bitter disappointment to the boy.

Booker hated to work underground. It was so dark down there. Sometimes he would get lost in the many narrow passages. Sometimes there would be explosions, and people would be hurt.

Yet it was in this very mine that the idea came to him that changed his whole life. One day Booker overheard two men talking about a great school for black people in Virginia. He crept nearer so that he could listen better. The men were speaking of the *Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute*. What they said sounded like all he ever wanted. He made up his mind that one day he would go there at all cost.

Two years passed. Booker had saved every penny he could for the 500-mile journey to Hampton. First he went by stagecoach. Then he begged rides in wagons. And finally he walked the last few miles. When he arrived at the Hampton Institute, the goal of all his dreams, he had exactly 50 cents in his pocket. Fifty cents to start his education! But it was one step forward.

During his long journey, Booker had slept on sidewalks and city streets. He hadn't had a bath or change of clothes for a long time. He was so untidy that the head teacher did not want to let him stay. Booker waited for the teacher's decision. Several hours passed.

At last the lady came to him and said, "The next room needs cleaning. Please sweep it."

Booker realized this was his chance. He swept that room three times. He took a cloth and dusted it four times. Every bench, table, and desk, all the woodwork around the walls, he dusted again and again till he could find not a speck more to remove. Then he reported to the lady, and she came to inspect what he had done. She looked carefully at everything, even wiping a handkerchief over the table to see if she could pick up any dirt. There was none.

"I guess you will do," she said.

This "entrance examination," Booker said afterward, was the most important he took in all his life.

Now he was in a real school at last! He would make the most of every precious hour that he had for study.

Some things, of course, were new and difficult for him. He was puzzled, for instance, when he found sheets on his bed. He had never seen sheets before, and he wondered what they were for. The first night he slept under both of them and the second night on top of both of them. But he soon learned what to do.

After graduating in 1875, Booker went back to his own hometown as a teacher. Not long afterward he was invited to join the faculty of the Hampton Institute, where he had been a student.

When a call came for a principal for a new training school at Tuskegee, Alabama, Booker Washington was recommended. Arriving in Tuskegee, Booker asked where the school was. "There isn't any, yet," he was told.

"Then we'll build one," he replied. Beginning with a small, leaky building, with only 30 pupils, the school expanded, until it became one of the greatest institutions of its kind in the world.

Impressed with the good work Washington was doing, many people sent him money, Andrew Carnegie gave the school \$600,000! Not long after, a poor elderly Black woman, more than 70 years of age and clad in rags, came to him and said, "Mr. Washington, I ain't got no money, but I want you to take these six eggs I've been saving and put them into educating our boys and girls." Booker never was quite sure who gave the most, Carnegie or this old woman.

Today Tuskegee is a large university with a teaching faculty of 300 with 3,171 students, more than 160 buildings, and 5,189 acres of campus. Booker T. Washington, the boy who was a slave and became founder and head of the Tuskegee Institute, will ever be remembered as one of the truly great men of his time. He sought nothing for himself, but worked all his life for others.

When Harvard University awarded him a degree, its president called him a wise and good servant of God and country. That's praise enough for any man.

Adapted from a story in Uncle Arthur's Storytime

THE BOY AND HIS SPARE MOMENTS.

A lean, awkward boy came one morning to the door of the principal of a celebrated school, and asked to see him.

The servant eyed his mean clothes, and thinking he looked more like a beggar than anything else, told him to go around to the kitchen.

The boy did as he was bidden, and soon appeared at the back door.

"I should like to see Mr. Brown," said he.

"You want a breakfast, more like," said the servant girl, "and I can give you that without troubling him."

"Thank you," said the boy; "I should have no objection to a bit of bread, but I should like to see Mr. Brown, if he can see me."

"Some old clothes, may be, you want," remarked the servant, again eyeing the boy's patched trousers. "I guess he has none to spare; he gives away a sight." And without minding the boy's request, she set out some food upon the kitchen table and went about her work.

"May I see Mr. Brown?" again asked the boy, after finishing his meal.

"Well, he's in the library. If he must be disturbed, he must, but he does like to be alone sometimes," said the girl, in a peevish tone. She seemed to think it very foolish to admit such an ill looking fellow into her master's presence. However, she wiped her hands, and bade him follow. Opening the library door, she said, "Here's somebody, sir, who is dreadfully anxious to see you, and so I let him in."

I don't know how the boy introduced himself, or how he opened his business, but I know that after talking awhile, the principal put aside the volume he was studying, took up some Greek books, and began to examine the new-comer. The examination lasted some time. Every question that the principal asked, the boy answered as readily as could be.

"Upon my word," exclaimed the principal, "you certainly do well!" Looking at the boy from head to foot, over his spectacles he asked, "Why, my boy, where did you pick up so much?"

"*In my spare moments,*" answered the boy.

Here he was, poor, hard working, with but few opportunities for schooling, yet almost fitted for college, by simply improving his *spare moments*. Truly, are not spare moments the "gold dust of time?" How precious they should be! What account can you give of your spare moments? What can you show for them? Look and see.

This boy can tell you how very much can be laid up by improving them; and there are *many* other boys, I am afraid, in the jail, in the house of correction, in the fore-castle of a whale ship, in the gambling house, or in the tippling shop, who, if you should ask them when they began their sinful courses, might answer: "*In my spare moments.*"

"In my spare moments I gambled for marbles."

"In my spare moments I began to smoke and drink."

"It was in my spare moments that I began to steal chestnuts from the old woman's stand."

"It was in my spare moments that I gathered with wicked associates."

Oh, be very, very careful how you spend your spare moments! Temptation always hunts you out in small seasons like these when you are not busy; he gets into your hearts, if he possibly can, in just such gaps. There he hides himself, planning all sorts of mischief. Take care of your spare moments. "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do."

THE BOY WHO TOOK A BOARDER

Once upon a time, about two hundred and fifty years ago, a boy stood at the door of a palace in Florence, Italy.

He was a kitchen boy in the household of a rich and mighty official. He was twelve years old, and his name was Thomas.

Suddenly he felt a tap on his shoulder. He turned around and said in great astonishment: "What! Is that you, Peter? What has brought you to Florence? How are all the people in Cortona?"

"They are all well," answered Peter, who likewise was a boy of twelve. "But I've left them for good. I want to be a painter. I've come to Florence to learn to paint. They say there's a school here where people are taught."

"But have you any money?" asked Thomas.

"Not a penny."

"Then you can't be an artist. You had better be a servant in the kitchen with me, here in the palace. You will be sure of something to eat, at least."

"Do you get enough to eat?" asked the other boy reflectively.

"Plenty, more than enough."

"I don't want to be a servant; I want to paint," said Peter. "But I'll tell you what we'll do. As you have more than you need to eat, you take me to board, and when I'm a grown-up painter, I'll settle the bill."

"Agreed!" said Thomas, after a moment's thought. "I can manage it. Come upstairs to the garret where I sleep, and I'll bring you some dinner by and by."

So the two boys went up to the little room among the chimney pots where Thomas slept. It was a small room, and the only furniture in it was an old straw mattress and two rickety chairs. The walls were whitewashed.

Now the food was good and plentiful, for when Thomas went down into the kitchen and foraged, he found abundance that the cook had carelessly discarded. Peter enjoyed the meal, and told Thomas that he felt as if he could fly to the moon.

"So far, so good," said he; "but, Thomas, I can't be a painter without paper and pencils and brushes and colors. Haven't you any money?"

"No," said Thomas, "and I don't know how to get any. I shall receive no wages for three years."

"Then I can't be a painter, after all," said Peter mournfully.

"I'll tell you what," suggested Thomas. "I'll get some charcoal down in the kitchen, and you can draw pictures on the wall."

Then Peter set resolutely to work, and drew so many figures of men and women and birds and trees and animals and flowers, that before long the walls were covered with pictures.

At last, one happy day, Thomas came into possession of a small piece of money. I don't know where he got it, but he was much too honest a boy to take money that did not belong to him.

You may be sure there was joy in the little room up among the chimney pots. Now Peter could have pencils and paper, and other things artists need. By this time the boy had learned to take walks every morning. He wandered about Florence, drawing everything he saw: the pictures in the churches, the fronts of the old palaces, the statues in the square, or the outlines of the hills. Then, when it became too dark to work any longer, Peter would go home and find his dinner tucked away under the old bed, where Thomas had put it, not so much to hide it as to keep it warm.

Things went on in this way for two years. None of the servants knew that Thomas kept a boarder, or if they did know it, they good-naturedly shut their eyes. The cook sometimes said that Thomas ate a good deal for a lad of his size.

One day the owner of the palace decided to repair it. He went all over the house in company with an architect and poked into places he had not visited for years. At last he reached the garret, and there he stumbled right into Thomas' room.

"Why, how's this?" he cried, astonished at the drawings in the little room. "Have we an artist among us? Who occupies this room?"

"The kitchen boy, Thomas, sir."

"A kitchen boy! So great a genius must not be neglected. Call the kitchen boy."

Thomas came in fear and trembling. He had never been in his employer's presence before. He looked at the charcoal drawings on the wall and then into the face of the great man.

"Thomas, you are no longer a kitchen boy," said the official kindly.

Poor Thomas thought he was dismissed from service, and then what would become of Peter?

"Don't send me away!" he cried. "I have nowhere to go, and Peter will starve. He wants to be a painter so much!"

"Who is Peter?"

"He is a boy from Cortona who boards with me. He drew those pictures on the wall, and he will die if he cannot be a painter."

"Where is he now?"

"He is wandering about the streets to find something to draw. He goes out every day."

"When he returns, Thomas, bring him to me. Such a genius should not be allowed to live in a garret."

Strange to say, Peter did not come back to his room that night. One week, two weeks went by, and still nothing was heard of him. At the end of that time a search was made and at last he was found. It seems he had fallen deeply in love with one of Raphael's pictures that was exhibited in a public building, and had asked permission to copy it. The men in charge, charmed with his youth and talent, had readily consented. They had given him food and a place to stay.

Thanks to the interest the rich official took in him, Peter was admitted to the best school of painting in Florence. As for Thomas, he had masters to instruct him in all the learning of the day.

Fifty years later, two old men were living together in one of the most beautiful houses in Florence. One of them was called Peter of Cortona; and the people said of him:

"He is the greatest painter of our time." The other was called Thomas; and all they said of him was: "Happy is the man who has him for a friend."

He was the kind boy who took care of his friend.

BURNED WITHOUT FIRE

Johnny found a big brass button and set to work shining it on a piece of woolen cloth. "Isn't it bright?" he said, after working awhile. "Just like gold!"

He rubbed away again as hard as he could, then brushed the button across the back of his hand to wipe off chalk dust. I had told him to put chalk on the cloth to brighten the button quicker.

"Ow!" he cried, dropping the button.

"What's the matter?" asked Mary.

"It's hot."

"Hot!" echoed Mary, laying down her book. "How can it be hot?"

"I don't know," said Johnny, "but it burned me."

"Nonsense!" replied Mary, picking up the button. "It's cold."

"It may be now," Johnny admitted; "but it was hot—warm, anyway."

"What a silly boy! You imagined it."

"I didn't," retorted Johnny.

Seeing that they were likely to do as many older people have done, dispute about a matter that neither understood, I took the button and rubbed it smartly on my coat sleeve and then put it to Mary's cheek.

"There!" exclaimed Johnny, as Mary cried, "Oh!" and put her hand to her face.

"I shouldn't have thought your arm could make it so warm," she said.

I rubbed the button on the tablecloth, and placed it once against her cheek, saying: "It couldn't have been my arm that warmed it this time."

"Of course not," observed Johnny.

"What did warm it?" Mary asked, her interest fully awakened.

"That's a good puzzle for you two to work at," I said. "Don't rub the button on the furniture, for it might scratch it; but you can try anything else."

Mary and Johnny worked for a long time, and still they were puzzled.

"Maybe the heat comes from our fingers," Mary suggested at last.

I put a stick through the eye of the button, so that it could be held without touching the hand. Then I rubbed the carpet, and it was as hot as ever.

"I guess it's the rubbing," said Johnny.

"A good guess indeed, for that is precisely where the heat comes from," I replied. "The simple fact that heat comes from rubbing is perhaps enough for you to know right now."

"I thought heat always came from fire," said Mary, "or from the sun."

There are other sources of heat," I replied, "our bodies, for instance. We keep warm when out of the sunshine and away from the fire."

"I never thought of that," said Mary.

"Do you remember the day the masons were pouring water on a pile of quicklime to make mortar for the new house over the way? The lime hissed and crackled, sending up clouds of steam. I have a piece of quicklime here. See, when I pour water on it, how it drinks up the water and grows hot. I saw a wagon loaded with lime set on fire once by a shower of rain."

"Fred told me about that, but I didn't believe him. Who'd expect fire from water?"

"Get me a small piece of ice, and I'll show you how even *that* may kindle a fire."

While Mary was getting the ice, I took from my cabinet a small bottle with a metal bead at the bottom.

"Is it lead?" asked Johnny, when I showed it to him.

"It is potassium," I said. "I'm going to set a little piece of it afire with the ice Mary has brought. There."

"Isn't it splendid!" cried Mary, as the metal flashed into flame.

"You can do anything, can't you?" said Johnny admiringly. His confidence in my ability is something frightful. Really, if I were to tell him I could set the moon afire, I think he'd believe me.

"No, Johnny," I replied; "there are very few things that I can do, as you will discover in time. But now, while we are talking of heat, let me show you another way of warming things. Please fetch me that old piece of iron in the garage, Mary, while Johnny brings my hammer."

When the materials were ready, I said, "Now watch me while I pound this piece of lead, and be ready to put your finger on it when I stop."

"Does the pounding heat it?"

"It does. I have seen a blacksmith take a piece of cold iron and hammer it on a cold anvil with a cold hammer until it was hot enough to set wood afire."

"But we are a long way from Johnny's button. Can you think of any other time you have seen things heated by rubbing?"

"We rub our hands when they are cold," Mary said, seeing Fred go through these motions when coming in from outdoors.

"I've read of savages' making fire by rubbing sticks together," Fred continued.

"They have several ways of doing it—or rather, different savages have different ways. One of the simplest is to rub one stick in a groove in another, rubbing briskly and bearing down hard. There is a bit of soft pine board that I made to experiment with, the other day. See! When I plow this stick up and down in the groove, the fine wood dust that gathers at the bottom begins to smoke a little and turns black. By working long enough and fast enough, I could set the dust on fire; but it is too tiresome when a match will do as well. We get our fire by rubbing, too, only we use some-thing that kindles quicker than wood. A single scratch on some rough surface develops heat enough to light it."

"What is it?" Mary asked.

"Phosphorus. I have some in this bottle. You rub the button, Johnny, while I take some of the phosphorus out on the point of my knife. Now touch it with the button. See! It is hot enough to set the phosphorus afire. We might light our fires that way, but it is more convenient to put the phosphorus on the end of a stick, and mix it with something to keep it from catching fire too easily. All we have to do is to rub the phosphorus point against anything rough. The friction heats it, and it takes fire.

"Did you ever hear of the traveler who was stopped by some barbarous people who knew nothing of matches? They would not let him go through their country, and while they were debating whether to kill him or send him back, he took a match from his pocket, struck it against his boot, and lighted it. To his surprise the people ran off to the village. After a while the chief man came back humbly, bringing loads of presents. He begged the traveler to go on his way in peace."

"What was the reason?"

"They had seen him draw fire from his foot, as they thought, and were afraid that he was a god who might burn them all up if they offended him."

"In God's creation we are constantly surrounded with mysteries, many of which we are not able to understand yet, but Jesus promises to explain them to those who receive and love Him," Mom told us that evening.

New conclusion(?): In God's creation we are surrounded with mysteries, many of which we are not able to understand yet. But in searching out these mysteries in His handwork, we can see the greatness of God," Mom told us that evening.]

THE BURNT COMPOSITION

"There! It is finished, Mamma! Will you read it now, and see if it is correct?"

Mrs. Carter looked up from her sewing at her little girl's eager, flushed face, smiling at her earnestness.

"Let me see, dear," she said, taking the papers in her own hand. "It looks very neat."

"There is not one blot or erasure," said Nettie; "if the spelling and grammar are right, I think my chance for a prize is as good as anyone's. Mr. Mason said he would give prizes for all the correct compositions, though the writing desk is for the best one in every way. I don't think I shall get that, Mamma. We all think Hattie Ross will have that if she is only careful about her blots. She does write so beautifully; only she will blot and smear badly. I guess she will be neat this time, though; the desk is such a beauty with a little silver plate for the name of the winner. If I can get one of the books for correct composition, I will be satisfied."

"I think you will get one, Nettie," said her mother after carefully reading the composition. "This is correct, well expressed, and very neat."

"Now, Mamma, will you tie it with the ribbons for me and I will put it away."

After tying the precious manuscript nicely with crisp, dainty ribbons, Nettie put it carefully in her desk, with long sigh of relief. It had been a very difficult task for the little twelve-year-old girl to complete a correct composition. She was not fond of writing, found it hard to put her ideas into words, and found it quite as hard to keep her sheet clean. So it was quite a triumph when the work was really completed, entirely done, and had been pronounced worthy of a place among the prize compositions.

The little girl was still in the room where she and her sisters studied, when Amy, her cousin, nearly her own age came in, flushed and tearful.

"Is your composition ready?" she asked.

"Yes, and mamma says it will do."

"Then you can help me with mine. I have tried and tried, and I can't write one."

"But, Amy, if I help you, you can't try for a prize. You know Mr. Mason said we must not have any help, even from our parents."

"Your mamma helped you."

"No, not one bit. She only read it when it was finished."

"But you will help me, Nettie. Nobody will ever know."

"But it will not be honorable."

However, Amy would not listen to her cousin. She coaxed a long time, making it very hard for tenderhearted, good-natured little Nettie to refuse the request. She loved Amy very dearly, and it was her constant habit to assist her with all her lessons and exercises. Only the fact that it would be a dishonorable trick upon their teacher kept her from yielding now. Hard as it was for her, she refused upon that plea.

Then Amy grew angry, and taunted her with jealousy, selfishness, and miserably mean motives, and said things which Nettie felt were untrue and unjust. Working herself into a fury, Amy suddenly seized the precious manuscript her cousin had just completed, and tossed it upon the red coals of the open grate.

"If you won't help me to a prize, you shan't have one yourself," she cried.

"Oh, Amy!"

The cry was too late to save the treasure. Already it was curling up in the fierce heat, and a bright blaze was in a few moments all that was left of the work of many play hours.

As the flame died away in a black mass, both children stood very still, looking at the destruction one passionate moment had made. Already Amy was sorry, for her tempests of temper never lasted long, and she hoped Nettie would scold and cry, as she would have done,

and then "make up." But Nettie's grief was too deep for anger. She did not speak after the first cry, but went silently from the room to lock herself in her own little bedroom, and sat down for a hearty cry.

Remember, she was but twelve years old, and had worked very faithfully for the promised reward. As the tears ran down her cheeks, her thoughts were very busy.

"I will never speak to Amy again, nor help her with a single lesson. She had no right to burn it. I would have helped her with anything else, but this would have been wrong; it would have been cheating to write this composition. I'll never forgive her, never! It was so pretty, too! And I cannot have another ready in time—there is so much to do before examination, and only one week for all. Oh dear! I wonder if Amy feels bad. I should, I know. I hope she does. Do I? Is this Christian forgiveness? Only one month since I resolved never to be bitter again, to conquer my temper, and try to be a real, true Christian, like Mamma; and now I am revengeful, unforgiving, and wicked. What shall I do? I *can't* forgive Amy, I can't."

So her thoughts ran, now blaming Amy, now herself, the tears flowing fast all the time. At last the little girl, tired of crying, knelt down and said very softly the Lord's Prayer. Her sweet face was very earnest as she whispered, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." I will forgive Amy. Help me, Heavenly Father, to forgive her, as I hope to have all my sins forgiven."

In the meantime, a very unhappy, penitent little girl was walking slowly homeward. Amy would have given all her own hard study for the other prizes if she could have restored the burnt composition. Her conscience was very sore. She knew that Nettie was right in refusing her request, and she knew that in every way she had been wrong; wrong in asking for help, wrong in getting angry and oh! How very, very wrong in taking such a wicked revenge for Nettie's refusal! She thought of the many hours Nettie had spent trying to help her in her studies. O the many times her cousin had given up a pleasant walk or ride to aid her in a difficult sum or exercise; and before she reached home, Amy was quite as sorry and felt quite as guilty and mean as Nettie could have wished her, had she been ever so revengeful.

The next morning, after Nettie had started for school Mrs. Carter was surprised to see Amy, with a grieved face standing before her.

"Aunt Mary," she said, trying not to cry, "did Nettie tell you about the composition?"

"Yes," Mrs. Carter said very gravely.

"Do you think she will forgive me, if I try to make up the loss, Aunt Mary? I am so sorry."

"I don't think the loss can be made up, Amy."

"I have tried to make it right, Aunt Mary. It was very hard to do, but I went to Mr. Mason this morning, and told him the whole story. He says if you will send him a note saying the composition was correct and neat, he will consider it the same as if he saw it himself. O Aunt Mary, please do! I am so miserable."

Mrs. Carter pressed a warm kiss upon the penitent little face.

"If you always atone for a fault so nobly as this, Amy," she said kindly, "you will not feel miserable long. It will be a lesson for you and help you to check the hasty temper that gets you into so much trouble. I will write the note to Mr. Mason now."

The note was soon ready, and Amy took it gratefully.

"Will Nettie forgive me now, Aunt Mary?"

"Nettie forgave you fully and freely before she slept, Amy."

"I wonder if I could be so good as that?" Amy said tearfully. "I am sure I can never be ugly to Nettie again."

When the examination day came, Mr. Mason handed each of the cousins a small pocket Bible.

"Yours," he said to the wondering Amy, "is to prove to you how much I appreciate the true penitence that acknowledges a fault at once, and tries to make amendment. Nettie earned a reward by her hard study, and she holds it in her hand; but, above all study, I prize the

Christian kindness and forgiveness that kept her silent when I asked for her composition, rather than tell me how it was destroyed."

I have told you this story, little readers, because it is true, every word of it, and proves how truly the power of prayer and principle will aid us in atoning for faults and forgiving our enemies.

COALS OF FIRE

Guy Morgan came in from school with rapid step and impetuous manner. His mother looked up from her work. There was a round, cheek, and an ominous glitter

She knew the signs. His naturally fierce temper had been stirred up in some way to a heat that had kindled his whole nature. He tossed down his cap, threw himself on an ottoman at her feet, and then said, with still a little of the heat of his temper in his tone, "Never say, after this, that I don't love you, Mother."

"I think I never did say so," she answered gently, as she passed her hand over the tawny locks, and brushed them away from the flushed brow. "But what special thing have you done to prove your love for me just now?"

"Taken a blow without returning it."

She bent over and kissed her boy. He was fifteen years old, a tall fellow with strong muscles, but he had not grown above liking his mother's kisses.

Then she said softly, "Tell me all about it, Guy."

"O, it was Dick Osgood! You know what a mean fellow he is, anyhow. He had been tormenting some of the younger boys 'till I could not stand it. Every one of them is afraid of him."

"I told him he ought to be ashamed of himself, and tried to make him leave off, 'till, after a while, he turned from them, and coming to me, he struck me in the face. I believe the mark is there now," and he turned the other cheek toward his mother. Her heart was filled with sympathy and secret indignation.

"Well," she said, "and you—what did you do?"

"I remembered what I had promised you for this year, and I took it—think of it, mother—took it, and never touched him! I just looked into his eyes, and said, 'If I should strike you back, I should lower myself to your level.'"

"He laughed a great, scornful laugh, and said, 'You hear, boys, Morgan is turned preacher. You'd better wait, sir, before you lecture me on my behavior to the little ones, 'till you have pluck enough to defend them. I've heard about the last impudence I shall from a coward like you.'"

"The boys laughed, and some of them said, 'Good for you, Osgood!' and I came home. I had done it for the sake of my promise to you! For I'm stronger than he is, any day; and *you* know, mother, whether there's a drop of coward's blood my veins. I thought you were the one to comfort me; though it isn't comfort I want so much, either. I just want you to release me from that promise, and let me go back and thrash him."

Mrs. Morgan's heart thrilled with silent thanksgiving. Her boy's temper had been her greatest grief. His father was dead, and she had brought him up alone, and sometimes she was afraid her too great tenderness had spoiled him.

She had tried in vain to curb his passionate nature. It was a power, which no bands could bind. She had concluded at last that the only hope was in enlisting his own powerful will, and making him resolve to conquer himself. Now he had shown himself capable of self-control. In the midst of his anger he had remembered his pledge to her, and had kept it. He would yet be his own master—this brave boy of hers—and the kingdom of his own mind would be a goodly sovereignty.

"Better heap coals of fire on his head!" she said quietly.

"Yes, he deserves a good scorching,"—pretending to misunderstand her,—"but I should not have thought you would be so revengeful."

"You know well enough what kind of coals I mean, and *Who* it was that said, 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink.' I cannot release you from your promise till the year for which you made it is over."

"I think that the Master who told us to render good for evil, understood all the wants and passions of humanity better than any other teacher has ever understood them. I am sure that what He said must be wise and right and best. I want you to try His way first. If that fails, there will be time enough after this year to make a different experiment."

"Well, I promised you," he said, "and I'll show you that, at least, I'm strong enough to keep my word until you release me from it. I think, though, you don't quite know how hard it is."

Mrs. Morgan knew that it was very hard for a true, brave-hearted boy to be called a coward, but she knew, also, that the truest bravery on earth is the bravery of endurance.

"Look out for the coals of fire!" she said smilingly, as her boy started for school the next morning. "Keep a good watch, and I'm pretty sure you'll find them before the summer is over."

But he came home at night depressed and a little gloomy. There had always been a sort of rivalry between him and Dick Osgood, and now the boys seemed to have gone over to the stronger side, and he had that bitter feeling of humiliation and disgrace, which is as bitter to a boy as the sense of defeat ever is to a man.

The weeks went on, and the feeling wore away a little. Still the memory of that blow rankled in Guy's mind, and made him unsocial and ill at ease. His mother watched him with some anxiety, but did not interfere. She had the true wisdom to leave him to learn some of the lessons of life alone.

At length came the last day of school, followed next day by a picnic, in which all the scholars, superintended by their teachers, were to join.

Guy Morgan hesitated a little and then concluded to go. The place selected was a lovely spot, known through all the neighborhood as "the old mill." It was on the banks of the Quassit River, where the stream ran fast, and the grass was green, and great trees with drooping boughs shut away the July sunlight.

Among the rest were Dick Osgood and his little sister Hetty, the one human being whom he seemed really and tenderly to love. The teacher's eyes were on him for this one day, and he did not venture to insult the older scholars or domineer over the little ones. He and Guy kept apart as much as they conveniently could, and Guy entered into the spirit of the day, and really enjoyed it much better than he had anticipated.

Dinner was spread on the grass, and though it was eaten with pewter spoons, and out of crockery of every hue and kind, it was certainly eaten with greater enjoyment and keener appetite than if it had been served in the finest dining room.

They made dinner last as long as they could, and then they scattered here and there, to enjoy themselves as they liked.

On the bridge, just above the falls, stood a little group, fishing. Among them were Dick Osgood and his sister. Guy Morgan, always deeply interested in the study of botany, was a little distance away, with one of the teachers, pulling in pieces a curious flower.

Suddenly a wild cry arose above the sultry stillness of the summer afternoon and the hum of quiet voices round. It was Dick Osgood's cry: "She's in, boys! Hetty's in the river, and I can't swim. O, save her! Save her! Will no one try?"

Before the words were out of his lips, they all saw Guy Morgan coming with flying feet—a race for life. He unbuttoned coat and vest as he ran, and cast them off as he neared the bridge. He kicked off his shoes, and threw himself over.

They heard him strike the water. He went under, rose again, and then struck out toward the golden head, which just then rose for the second time. Everyone who stood there lived moments, which seemed hours.

Mr. Sharp, the teacher with whom Guy had been talking, and some of the boys, got a strong rope, and running down the stream, threw it out on the water just above the falls, where Guy could reach it if he could get so near the shoreline!

The water was very deep where Hetty had fallen in, and the river ran fast. It was sweeping the poor child on, and Dick Osgood threw himself upon the bridge, and sobbed and

screamed. When she rose the third time, she was near the falls. A moment more and she would go over, down on the jagged, cruel rocks beneath.

But that time Guy Morgan caught her—caught her by her long, glistening, golden hair. Mr. Sharp shouted to him. He saw the rope, and swam toward it, his strong right arm beating the water back with hammer-strokes—his left motionless, holding his white burden.

"O God!" Mr. Sharp prayed fervently, "keep him up; spare his strength a little longer, a little longer!" A moment more and he reached the rope and clung to it desperately, while teacher and boys drew the two in over the slippery edge, out of the horrible, seething waters, and took them in their arms. But they were both silent and motionless. Mr. Sharp spoke Guy's name, but he did not answer. Would either of them ever answer again?

Teachers and scholars went to work alike for their restoration. It was well that there was intelligent guidance, or their best efforts might have failed.

Guy, being the stronger, was first to revive. "Is Hetty safe?" he asked.

"Only God knows?" Mr. Sharp answered. "We are doing our best."

It was almost half an hour before Hetty opened her blue eyes. Meantime Dick had been utterly frantic and helpless. He had sobbed and groaned and even prayed, in a wild fashion of his own, which perhaps the pitying Father understood and answered.

When he heard his sister's voice, he was like one beside himself with joy; but Mr. Sharp quieted him by a few low, firm words, which no one else understood.

Some of the larger girls arranged one of the wagons, and received Hetty into it.

Mr. Sharp drove home with Guy Morgan. When he reached his mother's gate, Guy insisted on going in alone. He thought it might alarm her to see some one helping him; besides, he wanted her a few minutes quite to himself. So Mr. Sharp drove away, and Guy went in. His mother saw him coming, and opened the door.

"Where have you been?" she cried, seeing his wet, disordered plight.

"In Quassit River, mother, fishing out Hetty Osgood."

Then, while she was busying herself with preparations for his comfort, he quietly told his story. His mother's eyes were dim, and her heart throbbed chokingly.

"O, if you had been drowned, my boy, my darling!" she cried, hugging him close, wet as he was. "If I had been there, Guy, I couldn't have let you do it."

"I went in after the coals of fire, Mother."

Mrs. Morgan knew how to laugh as well as to cry over her boy. "I've heard of people smart enough to set the river on fire," she said, "but you are the first one I ever knew who went in there after the coals."

The next morning came a delegation of boys with Dick Osgood at their head. Every one was there who had seen the blow which Dick struck, and heard his taunts afterward. They came into the sitting room, and said their say to Guy before his mother. Dick was spokesman.

"I have come," he said, "to ask you to forgive me. I struck you a mean, unjustifiable blow. You received it with noble contempt. To provoke you into fighting, I called you a coward, meaning to bring you down by some means to my own level. You bore that, too, with a greatness I was not great enough to understand; but I do understand it now."

"I have seen you—all we boys have seen you—face to face with Death, and have seen that you were not afraid of him. You fought with him, and came off ahead; and we all are come to do honor to the bravest boy in town; and I to thank you for a life a great deal dearer and better worth saving—than my own."

Dick broke down just there, for his tears choked him.

Guy was as grand in his forgiveness as he had been in his forbearance.

Hetty and her father and mother came afterward, and Guy found himself a hero before he knew it. But none of it all moved him as did his mother's few fond words, and the pride in her joyful eyes. He had kept, with honor and with peace, his pledge to her, and he had his reward. The Master's way of peace had not missed him.

THE CONDUCTOR'S MISTAKE

The train was waiting at a station of one of our Western railroads. The baggage-master was busy with his checks. Men, women, and children were rushing for the cars, anxious to get seats before the locomotive pulled away.

A man, carelessly dressed, was standing on the station platform, seemingly giving little attention to what was going on. It was easy to see that he was lame, and at a hasty glance, one might have supposed that he was a man of neither wealth nor influence.

The conductor gave him a contemptuous look, and slapping him familiarly on the shoulder, called out: "Hello, Limpy! Better get aboard, or the train will leave you behind."

The man made no reply. As the train started to move, the man climbed on the last car and walked quietly in and took a seat.

The train had gone a few miles when the conductor appeared at the door of the car where our friend was sitting. Passing along taking tickets, he soon discovered him. "Your ticket, quick!"

"I don't pay," replied the lame man quietly.

"Don't pay?"

"No, sir."

"We'll see about that. I shall put you off at the next station." And he seized his valise.

"Better not be so rough, young man," returned the stranger.

The conductor released the bag for a moment, and seeing that he could do no more then, passed on to collect the fare from the other passengers. As he stopped at a seat a few paces off, a man who had heard the conversation, asked: "Do you know who that man is to whom you were speaking?"

"No, sir."

"That is Peter Warburton, the president of this railroad."

"Are you sure?" asked the conductor, trying to conceal his worry.

"I know him."

The color rose in the young man's face, but with strong determination he controlled himself and went on collecting fares as usual.

Meanwhile Mr. Warburton sat quietly in his seat. None of those near him could interpret the expression of his face, nor tell what his next movement would be. He could get even if he chose. He could tell the directors the truth, and the young man would be fired. Would he do it? Those who sat near him waited curiously to see what would happen.

Presently the conductor came back. He walked up to Mr. Warburton's seat and took his books from his pocket, the bank bills and tickets he had collected, and laid them beside Mr. Warburton.

"I resign my place, sir," he said.

The president looked over the accounts for a moment, and then, motioning him into the vacant seat beside him, said: "Sit down. I want to talk to you."

When the young man sat down, the president spoke to him in an undertone: "My young friend, I have no wish for revenge. You have been impudent. Your manner would have been injurious to the company if I had been a passenger. I could fire you, but I will not. In the future, remember to be polite to all you meet. You cannot judge a man by the coat he wears, and the poorest should be treated with kindness. Take up your books, sir. If you change your conduct, nothing that has happened will injure you."

THE COUNT AND THE DOVE

Cruelty to animals is always the sign of a mean and little mind, whereas we invariably find really great men distinguished by their humanity.

I remember having read a beautiful story of Count Zinzendorf when a boy. He was a great German noble, and lived to do much good in the world.

One day, when he was playing with his hoop near the banks of a deep river, which flowed outside the walls of a castle where he lived, he espied a dove struggling in the water. By some means the poor little creature had fallen into the river, and was unable to escape. The little Count immediately rolled a large washtub, which had been left near, to the water's edge, jumped into it, and though generally very timid on the water, by the aid of a stick, he managed to steer himself across the river to the place where the dove lay floating and struggling. With the bird in his arms, he guided the tub back, and got safely to land. After warming his little captive tenderly in his bosom, he ran with it into the wood, and set it free. His mother, who had watched the whole transaction in trembling anxiety, from her bedroom window, now came out.

"Were you afraid?" she asked.

"Yes, I was, rather," he answered, "but I could not bear that it should die so. You know, mother, its little ones might have been watching for it to come home!"

COURAGE AND COWARDICE

Boys are very apt to get wrong ideas about courage and cowardice; they often confound the two, calling that courage which is cowardice, and that cowardice which is courage. Two or three illustrations will make this plain to all our boy readers.

George came into the house one day, all dripping wet. His mother, as she saw him, exclaimed: "Why, George, my son, how came you so wet?"

"Why, mother, one of the boys said I dare not jump into the creek, and I tell you, I am not to be dared."

Now, was it courage that led George to do that? Some boys would say it was, and that he was a brave and courageous boy. But no, George was a coward, and that was a very cowardly act. He well knew that it was wrong for him to jump into the creek with his clothes on, but he was afraid the other boys would laugh at him, if he should stand and be dared.

Edward came strutting along up to James, and putting his fist in his face said, "Strike that if you dare!" just to see if he couldn't get him into a quarrel. Now, which would show the most real courage, for James to give him a hit and have a brutal fight, and both get wounded, or to say, as he did: "Edward, if you want a quarrel, you have come to the wrong boy. I never fight, because it is wrong. You may call me a coward if you will, but I will show you that I have courage enough not to be tempted by your ridicule to do what I know is *wrong!*" That was brave and courageous.

Well, a great man, Mr. A., a member of Congress, said something that offended Mr. B., another great man. Mr. B. sent him a note and dared him to fight, that is, he challenged him to fight a duel. Mr. A. accepted the challenge, and they met with deadly weapons and sought to take each other's life. Now, some said Mr. A. was a man of courage, because, like the foolish boy who jumped into the creek, he wouldn't be *dared*. But Mr. A. accepted that challenge, probably, through cowardice. He knew it was breaking a positive command of God to attempt to kill the man who dared him, but he had not courage enough to bear the tauntings of those who would say he was afraid to fight. He was a coward!

A good definition of courage is, "not to be afraid to do what is right, and to be afraid to do what is wrong." The stories of Daniel and his three friends, and of Joseph, give us fine examples of those who possessed true courage, who were not afraid to do what was right, and who were afraid to do what was wrong.

*DARE to be honest, good, and sincere,
Dare to be upright, and you never need fear.
Dare to be brave in the cause of the right,
Dare with the enemy ever to fight.
Dare to be loving and patient each day,
Dare speak the truth, whatever you say.
Dare to be gentle and orderly too,
Dare shun the evil, whatever you do.
Dare to be cheerful, forgiving, and mild,
Dare shun the people whom sin has defiled.
Dare to speak kindly, and ever be true,
Dare to do right, and you'll find your way through.*

THE CRACKED POT

A water bearer in India had two large pots, each hung on each end of a pole that he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, and while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water at the end of the long walk from the stream to the master's house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his master's house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect to the end for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you." "Why?" asked the bearer. "What are you ashamed of?"

"I have been able, for these past two years, to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your master's house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

The water bearer felt sorry for the old cracked pot, and in his compassion he said, "As we return to the master's house, I want you to notice the beautiful flowers along the path."

Indeed, as they went up the hill, the old cracked pot took notice of the sun warming the beautiful wild flowers on the side of the path, and this cheered it some. But at the end of the trail, it still felt bad because it had leaked out half its load, and so again it apologized to the bearer for its failure.

The bearer said to the pot, "I bid you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I took advantage of it. I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back from the stream you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate my master's table. Without you being just the way you are, he would not have this beauty to grace his house."

Each of us has our own unique flaws. We are all cracked pots. But if we will allow it, the Lord will use our flaws to grace His Father's table. In God's great economy, nothing goes to waste. So as we seek ways to minister together, and as God calls you to the tasks He has appointed for you, don't be afraid of your flaws. Acknowledge them, and allow Him to take advantage of them, and you, too, can be the cause of beauty in His pathway.

The Bible says:

Shall the thing molded say to him who molded it, why did you make me thus?" Or does not the potter have authority over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? (Romans 9:20-21)

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not out of us. (2 Corinthians 4:7)

Always rejoice, unceasingly pray, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

DISHONESTY

Some time ago a youth of about sixteen came from the country to Boston, to fill a subordinate situation in one of our first mercantile houses. The head of the firm received the youth in the most kindly manner, and caused his son to take the stranger around town, and show him the principal places during the afternoon of his arrival.

While amusing themselves in this way, the stranger youth told his companion that, in coming along in the train that morning, he had given a boy a bright cent for a pond lily, and that the coin having been mistaken for a five-cent, the vender of lilies had paid him four cents back as change.

The merchant's son questioned the honesty of the transaction, but the young man from the country defended it on the score of its smartness. Shocked at the absence of principle in his companion, the merchant's boy told his father of the transaction, who next morning interrogated the young man from the country concerning it, and found that he was somewhat inclined to pride himself on account of the act.

"Was the cheating of the poor boy, who, perhaps, had a sick mother to provide for by his industry, not cruel, let alone unjust?" queried the good merchant.

"It was his lookout," the boy replied.

"Was your conduct not dishonest?" asked the merchant.

"I don't know that it was. He ought to have been smart enough to not have given me the money."

"Young man," said the merchant, "I call your share in the matter stealing, and if the four cents had been so taken by me, I believe they would have burned a hole in my pocket."

The youth boldly replied, "They have not burned a hole in mine, sir."

Disgusted at discovering such moral *obliquity* [*deviation from the straight path*] in the young man, the merchant told him it was impossible that he could employ one who exhibited such dishonest notions concerning a small thing, for in matters of great importance the possessor of such loose ideas of honesty would most likely give way.

With much good advice, the youth was sent home to his father with a letter from the merchant relating the affair stated above and expressing regret that the circumstance had completely shut the boy out from his confidence. So, the young man lost an excellent chance of succeeding in life; but it is hoped that the lesson may teach him hereafter that "honesty is the best policy."

THE DOLL THAT GREW!

Hope had a very strange little doll. It was a doll that looked very much like a gingerbread boy and it was stuffed with hard kernels of corn. You see, Hope lived quite a long time ago, and when she coaxed her mother for a doll her mother had to sit down and make one for her, for there were no stores nearby where she might buy one.

Although it was not a beautiful doll like the one, perhaps, you have, still, Hope loved it very dearly, and played house with her and took her out for walks just like little girls do with their dollies today.

One day Hope and her brother James had a bad quarrel. James had been carving out a pretty little ship and was carefully cutting out one of the masts when Hope bumped into him, knocking the little ship to the floor. Several pieces were broken off, and James in an angry voice cried,

"Can't you watch where you're going? Look what you did?"

"I don't care if I did!" answered Hope. Of course she did care, whatever made her say that, she wondered? She was so ashamed that she hurried out doors.

"I'll fix her, I will! —the mean thing!" thought James and just then he noticed her little doll lying on a chair. Picking it up he hurried out another door and made his way to the tool shed where he got a shovel. Then he ran quickly around to the garden, and away down at the end of it where there was soft ground and nothing seemed to be planted. He dug a hole and buried the doll!

"There that's the end of that! That'll pay her back for breaking my things," said James to himself. "And nobody will ever know what happened to it!" But James forgot about God! God has said, "He who covers his sins will not prosper" (Prov. 28:13), and again, "Be sure your sin will find you out!"

Many days went by, and Hope cried many tears, but no one could find the little doll. It seemed to be a mystery that couldn't be solved—the doll had just vanished! James was not as happy as he had thought he would be either, instead he began to feel he had done a pretty mean thing. Once he even thought of digging the doll up again, but when he thought of the hard time he would have trying to explain how it happened to be so dirty he decided to leave it where it was.

A few days after a rainy spell Mother was out in the garden gathering some vegetables when she noticed a spot of fresh green down at the foot of the garden. "That's strange," she thought, "there is nothing planted down there."

So she went closer to see, and there, just in the shape of a little doll were green blades of corn growing! The hidden sin was uncovered, just as God's Word says it will be.

Sin hidden in the heart will just as surely be uncovered one day too, and oh! —What a sad day it will be for all who have not trusted the Lord Jesus as their Savior! Why not, right today, believe on Him "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of offenses" Eph. 1:7.

HACHIKO, THE FAITHFUL DOG

The city of Tokyo is one of the biggest cities in the world. It has many train stations. One of Tokyo's busiest stations is Shibuya. And right outside of Shibuya station there is a statue of a dog—a dog called Hachiko.

Hachiko belonged to a man named Mr. Ueno. Each morning, no matter what the weather, Hachiko walked Mr. Ueno to the Shibuya station, where Mr. Ueno caught the train. Hachiko always waited for Mr. Ueno to disappear into the station, then he turned around and went home. At the end of the day Hachiko returned to the station to pick up his master for the walk home.

One spring morning Hachiko walked his master to the station as usual. Mr. Ueno said, "See you this afternoon, my friend!" and left to catch his train. As usual, Hachiko watched his master disappear before going home.

That afternoon Hachiko returned to the station at the usual hour. He waited and waited and waited. But his master did not show up. That afternoon Mr. Ueno had suddenly died, but of course, Hachiko didn't know that. Hachiko waited several hours. Then he walked home alone.

But the next day Hachiko went to the station again to wait for his master to come. He went again and again, day after day, year in year out.

One morning, almost ten years after his master had died, Hachiko went to Shibuya station as usual. By this time he was an old dog, and making the trip to the station was harder and harder for him. He waited at the usual place. All of a sudden he fell over and died.

The people of Tokyo were so touched by Hachiko's faithfulness that they made a statue in his memory. When I lived in Japan, I passed by the statue many times. Each time I saw the statue I thought, *If this dog, whom God created, was so utterly faithful, can you imagine how faithful God must be—God who created this dog?*

From *How Long Is God's Nose?* by John Timmer. Zondervan Publishing, 1997.

[NOTE: The story can be found on Wikipedia with photos]

THE HARD WAY

*He who covers his transgressions will not prosper, But whoever confesses
and forsakes them will obtain mercy. Proverbs 28:13*

"Tim, I have one more errand for you; then you may have the rest of the afternoon free."

"Great. Thanks, Dad. But what do you want me to do first?" replied Tim.

His Dad said, "I would like you to carry this one hundred dollar bill to the widow, Mrs. Boardman. Be careful not to lose it."

"I'll be careful," promised Tim. Tim was a good kid, and for the most part pretty careful, but at times, when he was in a hurry, he would forget to follow his Dad's instructions about how to best take care of his money. Tim had a tendency to cram dollar bills and change into his pockets instead of doing what his Dad recommended, which was to place his dollar bills carefully in his wallet, fold the wallet and place it in his pocket. "This," his Dad would say, "is to be orderly—a place for every thing and everything in its place." Today, even though he was being entrusted with quite a bit of money, he was in a big hurry to have some free time. After all, it was the first day of his summer vacation. So, he put the hundred-dollar bill in his pocket. At least, he tried to be a little more careful, because of his Dad's charge not to lose it. He folded it up several times and stuck it deep down in his pocket. But was the pocket "the place" for his money? No, his wallet was the place his father told him to use for his money. I wonder, would it have taken the same amount of time to get out his wallet and put the hundred-dollar bill there, as his Dad had so often instructed him to do?

As I said, it was the first day of vacation, and Tim felt happy to be outside in the sunshine heading down the road to Mrs. Boardman's house. He was thinking of the good days ahead—two months and no school! Perhaps the pleasant day, the fresh air, and the sunlight had something to do with making him happy. Something else helped to make Tim happy. He was glad to be helping out his Dad by running this errand, and happy that his family was helping out Mrs. Boardman.

Mrs. Boardman lived some distance up the road. As Tim made his way to her house he thought to keep his eye out for unusual rocks, because he had a great rock collection he was building. As he saw one he would slip it in his pockets. He passed his school, and the little pond, and was passing the willow grove, when suddenly he decided to make a whistle to blow along the way. So, he climbed over the fence and cut several willow twigs and stuck those in his pockets. Eventually, he reached a log lying on a grass plot by the roadside. Here he sat down and made two whistles and spread out the rocks he had collected to get a good look at what he had found. Some of them were quite unusual and he was happy to have found them. The twigs made some wonderful music to Tim's ears.

After awhile of sitting on the log, he thought he had better get on over to Mrs. Boardman's so he could finish his errand and be on with his day, so he gathered up his rocks and his best whistle, crammed them in his pockets and set off. As he shut the widow's gate, Tim put his hand in his pocket to take out the hundred-dollar bill, so that he might have it ready to hand it to her when she came to the door, but it was not there! Thinking he had felt in the wrong pocket, he put his hand in the other, fully expecting to feel the bill between his fingers. It was not there.

Tim felt alarmed. Could he have lost it? He searched carefully in every pocket, but the hundred-dollar bill was lost. He turned around and went slowly back, looking carefully along the road for the lost money. He searched around the log, in the willow grove, by the roadside, every step of the way, but no hundred dollar bill was to be seen! He went over the road again with no better success. At length he sat down upon the log to consider what he should do.

The money was lost, there was no doubt of that. His dad had always told him to be orderly and put things in their place, so you can find them when you need them. And today he had told Tim to be especially careful. Unfortunately, he had not taken his father's way. Now what should he do? His first thought was to go back to the store and tell his dad all about it. This would be the right way, but he disliked to go, for he knew his dad would blame him for not handling the money properly and carefully.

Tim decided he would not go to his dad then. He would go and play with the boys awhile. Perhaps his dad would never know. At any rate he would not tell him at once. So he got up from the log and walked slowly toward the school grounds. Soon he was playing with the boys.

In the evening Tim went home and sat down at the supper table with the family. Soon after the family had prayed over the meal, while his brothers and sisters were talking with each other about what they had been doing through the day, his dad turned to him and said: "Oh Tim, did you carry the hundred-dollar bill over to Mrs. Boardman?"

"Yes, sir," answered Tim promptly.

The question was asked so suddenly that he had no time to make up his mind what to answer. He felt less like telling the truth than he had at first. It seemed too hard. He thought to take the easier way by answering "Yes." The easier way! Poor boy, he had not learned yet that it was the hard way.

Soon after supper Tim went upstairs to bed. When he said his evening prayer he did not feel that God was listening to him, and he passed a restless night.

In the morning he woke up to find the sun shining into his room. Leaping out of bed in high spirits, he began to dress. Suddenly he thought of the lost money, and all his happy feelings flew out the window.

The day went by slowly. Tim was troubled by the fear that his dad would find out about the lost money, yet he found it harder every hour to make up his mind to tell what had happened.

In the evening Tim could not stand it any longer. The easy way had actually become the hard way. While sitting in the front room he made up his mind to go and tell his Dad all about it. He started toward the office, where his dad was. Every step in the right direction gave him new strength. He opened the office door and came to the table where his dad sat writing.

"Well, Tim," his dad said kindly, "what is it?"

"Oh Dad," said the boy, but he could not go on. He bowed his head upon the table and his shoulders shook.

In a few minutes Tim raised his head, and began again: "I want to tell you, Dad"—but it was too much, he could not go on.

"Wait a minute, Tim. Let me tell you first," his dad said. "You want to tell me that you did not carry the hundred-dollar bill to Mrs. Boardman, that you lost it on the way, that last night you told a lie about it, that you felt wretched all the time. You wanted to tell me, but you did not dare. Is that it?"

"Yes, sir," sobbed Tim.

"You wanted to take a way that you thought would be easier than the right way, but you found out it is a great deal harder."

Tim knew that was true. He saw that he might have spared himself a great deal of uneasiness and sorrow by choosing the right way.

To help Tim remember, it was decided he should earn a hundred dollars as soon as he could and take it to Mrs. Boardman. Tim set about earning the money, and did he ever have to work hard. Eventually, before summer vacation was over, he carried it with a light heart to Mrs. Boardman.

The strangest part of the whole matter was that while Tim was returning from Mrs. Boardman's he thought to himself, "Let me take one more look over by that log." And what do you know—he found it! It was wedged way under the log where he had not seen it the first time he looked!

Adapted from a story in *Choice Stories for Children*

HONORING YOUR PARENTS THROUGH OBEDIENCE

You might wonder what God means when He commands that we honor our father and our mother. Well, one of the ways we honor our parents is to obey them. But, as we all know, a picture is worth a thousand words. The story I am about to tell you gives us a very good picture of honoring through obedience.

Let me ask you a question: Have you ever seen an ostrich swallow an apple? It's not at all like watching your cat swallow a piece of meat. Your cat's meat goes down so fast you can almost hear it hit the cat's stomach.

But an ostrich has a long neck. When it swallows an apple, the apple takes a long time to get to the ostrich's stomach.

Let me ask you another question: Have you ever seen a giraffe swallow a watermelon? It's not at all like watching your friend swallow a cookie. Your friend's cookie goes down so fast you can almost hear it hit the bottom of her stomach.

But a giraffe has a very long neck. When a giraffe swallows a watermelon, the melon takes a very long time to get down to the giraffe's stomach. I suppose a giraffe has to eat breakfast in the evening and lunch first thing in the morning in order for those meals to reach its stomach on time!

Let me ask you one more question: Don't you think that sometimes you are just like an ostrich or a giraffe? You're not? Well, sometimes I wonder...

When your mom or dad tells you to clean your messy room and you say "Okay!" Do you wait a few minutes, a few hours, or even a day before you begin cleaning up? If you do, you're just like an ostrich or a giraffe. You swallow your mom's or dad's words, but the words take a long time to go down your long neck and do any good.

It seems to me a person who wants to honor his father and mother, needs a short neck. How about you?

Adapted from a story found in HLIGN by John Timmer, Zondervan Publishing House.

HONORING YOUR PARENTS THROUGH THANKFULNESS

You might wonder what God means when He commands that we honor our father and our mother. Well, one of the ways we honor our parents is to be thankful for all their care toward us and realize that all that we have as children comes from them. But, as we all know, a picture is worth a thousand words. The story I am about to tell you gives us a very good picture of honoring through thankfulness and appreciation...

Have you ever heard the story of Dave? Even though Dave was only ten years old, he always thought about money. One morning, when he came down for breakfast, he put a card on his mother's plate.

When his mother saw it, she could hardly believe her eyes. The card said:

Mother owes Dave:

\$2.00 for running errands

\$2.00 for cleaning his room

\$4.00 for mowing the lawn

\$2.00 for baby-sitting Mary

Total amount Mother owes Dave: \$10.00

After Dave's mom read the card, she didn't say a word. The next morning, there was a card on Dave's plate and on top of the card was a ten-dollar bill. Dave picked up the ten-dollar bill and was pleased.

Mmm, he thought, I'm a pretty good businessman. Then he read the card. It said:

Dave owes Mother:

\$0.00 for three meals a day

\$0.00 for clothes, shoes, toys

\$0.00 for a beautiful room

\$0.00 for picking up the mess he leaves every day

Total amount Dave owes Mom: \$0.00

What do you think Dave did with the ten-dollar bill? If you had been Dave, what would you have done?

Adapted from a story found in HLIGN by John Timmer, Zondervan Publishing House.

THE HOT STONE

The people living in the middle of Africa have a game. They take a stone and put it in the fire until it is very hot. Then a group of men form a circle, and one of them takes the stone out of the fire. Because the stone is very hot, he can't hold it in his hands. So what does he do? He quickly throws it to the next man, who then quickly throws it to the next man, and so on, around the circle.

Any man who doesn't throw the stone quickly, burns his hands. So the trick of the game is to catch and throw the stone as fast as possible.

Evil is like that hot stone. Evil burns, so people quickly pass it on to the next person. Let me give you two examples.

When I was a little boy, I could just reach the sugar bowl on top of the tea cabinet in our living room. I would stand on tiptoe, wet my finger, dip it in the sugar bowl, and lick it off.

But of course, I would always leave behind a trail of sugar on the tea cabinet. And of course, my mother would see the sugar and ask, "Who's been eating sugar?"

Then I would point my sticky sugary finger at my brother and say, "Martin did it." You see, I threw the hot stone to my brother.

Adam and Eve did the same thing. When God asked Adam, "Why did you eat from the tree of which I told you not to eat?" Adam answered, "Eve made me do it." Quickly, Adam threw the hot stone to Eve.

And what did Eve do? When God asked her why she ate from the tree of which God told her not to eat, Eve said, "I ate because the snake deceived me." Quickly Eve threw the hot stone to the snake.

You children sometimes do the same thing, don't you? You do something bad and get caught. And what do you do? You blame your brother or sister or friend. Quickly you throw the hot stone to them.

What we all should do is drop the hot stone at our own feet and not throw it to someone else. What we should do is take the blame for the bad thing we did, say we're sorry we did it, and ask God to forgive us.

From *HLIGN* by John Timmer, Zondervan Publishing, 1997.

HOW MUCH LAND?

Such are the ways of everyone greedy for gain; It takes away the life of its owners. Proverbs 1:19

Let your way of life be without the love of money, being satisfied with the things which are at hand; for

He Himself has said, "I shall by no means give you up, neither by any means shall I abandon you."
Hebrews 13:5

Leo Tolstoy, a Russian writer, wrote many beautiful stories. One of his stories is about a man called Pakhom. Let me tell you the story.

Pakhom is a farmer who has but one wish—to have more land. One day Pakhom hears that in the country of the Bashkirs there is plenty of land available at a cheap price. So he goes there and talks to the Bashkir chief. "What is your price for the land?" Pakhom asks.

Only a thousand dollars a day," the chief answers.

"How many acres would that be?" Pakhom asks.

We don't sell by the acre," the chief answers. "We sell only by the day. As much land as you can walk around in a day, that much land is yours. That's the way we figure land, and the price is one thousand dollars a day."

"But let me warn you. If on that same day you do not return to the spot where you started, you lose your thousand dollars."

"It's a deal," Pakhorn says.

The next day before sunrise Pakhom and his servant and the Bashkir chief with some of his men go to a hill overlooking a vast area of grassland. The chief takes off his cap, lays it down, and says, "This will be the mark. Lay your money in the cap and have your servant remain beside it while you are gone. From this mark you will start and to this mark you will return."

Pakhom takes out his money, lays it in the cap, and then starts walking toward the east. A couple of mounted Bashkirs ride behind him to drive in stakes to mark off Pakhom's land.

After walking a couple of miles, Pakhom grows warm and takes off some of his clothes. Later, Pakhom takes off his boots. *Walking without them will be easier*, he tells himself. On and on he walks—for the farther he goes, the better the land becomes.

Pakhom begins to tire. Glancing at the sun, he sees that it's time for lunch. He eats some bread but without sitting down. Having eaten, he feels strong again. And on he goes.

The sun seems to grow hotter and hotter. Pakhom is almost worn out. As he is about to begin to return to the spot where he started, he sees another section of beautiful land. He decides he must have it, so he walks on.

It's getting late now, and Pakhom has to be back before sunset. So he finally heads for the starting point. *I must hurry straight back now, otherwise I won't make it back in time*, Pakhom tells himself.

Pakhom's feet are aching and from time to time he staggers. But he still has a long way to go. To make it back in time, Pakhom breaks into a run. He can hear the Bashkirs cheering him on. Now he can see the cap and his servant sitting beside it. Pakhom reaches the hill just as the red sun touches the earth. He scrambles up the slope. Then he stumbles and falls. As he falls, he stretches out his hand toward the cap and touches it.

"Pakhom, you have earned much land indeed!" the Bashkir chief shouts.

But Pakhom does not hear. When his servant tries to raise him, he finds that Pakhom is dead.

After a while the chief gets up, takes a spade from the ground, throws it to Pakhom's servant, and says, "Bury him!"

After the Bashkirs have left, the servant buries his master in a small plot of land—just big enough for his master’s body.

Poor Pakhom was a greedy man. He thought, “The more land I have, the happier I’ll be.”
But Jesus says, “What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?”

From *HLGN* by John Timmer. Zondervan Publishing, 1997.

Adapted from Leo Tolstoy’s short story entitled, *How Much Land Does a Man Need?*

A HUMBLE HERO

God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. 1 Peter 5:5b

This is a story of a boy named Johnny who lived on the outskirts of a small town. He had to walk about a mile to school down a road where there were just a few houses. On that road, every day he had to cross a bridge that spanned the river that flowed right next to the town. Often times he had a friend to walk with, but not this particular day.

School had begun and Johnny had not yet entered the classroom. Miss Gibson was sitting at her desk marking the attendance record.

"Everybody seems to be in school on time today," she said. "That is, all except Johnny. Has anybody seen him?"

No one spoke.

"Does anybody know whether Johnny is sick today?"

A hand went up. "He can't be sick, Miss Gibson, because I saw him fishing in the creek yesterday evening."

"Thank you," said Miss Gibson, closing the book. "I need to give the attendance report to the office. I'll be back in just a moment. Please, all of you work quietly at your desks until I return.

She had barely been gone a minute, however, when the classroom door opened, and in walked Johnny. Immediately, at the sight of him confusion broke loose. Everyone began to speak at once.

"Johnny!" cried one of the boys. "What have you been doing?"

"Johnny!" cried another. "What happened to you? Where have you been?" They had reason to ask. No one had ever come to school looking quite like Johnny looked at that moment. Johnny was actually dripping wet. His hair was all mussed up as if he had been swimming. His clothes were soaked, and his shoes squished water as he walked.

Everyone roared with laughter.

Suddenly the door handle began to turn. Instantly there was silence. Johnny moved swiftly to his desk and sat down. The teacher entered and looked around.

"So you're here at last, Johnny," she said. "Have you any excuse for being late?" She took a closer look at him. "What happened to your hair?"

"Nothing," said Johnny, as he tried to smooth it back into place.

"Stand up!"

Johnny stood up. She saw his wet shirt and his soggy trousers. He looked as if he wanted to crawl out of sight.

A hand went up. "Miss Gibson, there's a puddle under Johnny's seat."

At this, laughter broke out all over again.

"Silence!" said Miss Gibson. "Johnny, why on earth are you dripping wet? What happened?"

"Well..." began Johnny. He was having a hard time answering the teacher for he was remembering the verse he had learned that week about how God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

But then, just at that moment the door opened again, and this time it was the principal, with two policemen behind him. They walked into the room and right up to the teacher's desk.

"Is Johnny Gordon in class today?" the principal asked Miss Gibson.

"The police!" whispered all the children.

"There he is," said Miss Gibson.

"The police," said the principal, "have just come here to ask about him. They say he jumped off the bridge on his way to school this morning and saved the life of a little girl who, on the way to school, had somehow fallen into the river and was drowning."

"Are you Johnny?" one of the officers asked, turning to Johnny.

"Yes, officer."

"Now you know, Johnny, that was a very dangerous thing you did. Was there no adult around to ask for help?"

"No, sir. I looked but there was none. I already have my life-saving badge for swimming, so I've already practiced many life-saving techniques in swimming. I just knew if I did not do something, that little girl would not make it."

"I'm very proud of you, son," said the principal. "That was a brave thing to do. God bless you. But why did you come to school like this? Why didn't you go back home and change?"

"Well, you see, my parents have been getting after me about taking better care of my clothes and I guess I was just afraid they would be angry with me for getting my clothes soaked," said Johnny. "I just figured they would dry eventually and maybe no one would notice. Besides, I was already late for school."

"Well, they are not angry with you," said the principal. "And neither am I, or your teacher, for coming late. I've been talking with your parents. They too, though quite shaken at the news, are very proud of you, just as I am." Then turning to the class, he said. "We're all proud of him, aren't we, students?"

Most of the kids, especially those who had been laughing at Johnny a few minutes before, were just speechless. They just nodded their heads. Some said, "Way to go, Johnny!" Everyone was quite impressed with their classmate and later, during recess, many came to ask about what had happened and to congratulate him. It wasn't every day you had a real hero right in your own classroom, and a humble one at that!

Adapted from *Uncle Arthur's StoryTime*

INTO THE SUNSHINE

"I wish father would come home." The voice of the boy who said this had a troubled tone.

"Your father will be angry," said Aunt Phoebe, who was sitting in the room reading a book.

Richard raised himself from the sofa where he had been for half an hour, and with a touch of indignation in his voice, answered: "He'll be sorry, not angry. Father never gets angry."

"That's Father now!" He started up after the lapse of nearly ten minutes, as the sound of a bell reached his ear, and went to the door. He came slowly back, saying with a disappointed air, "It wasn't Father. I wonder what keeps him so late. Oh, I wish he would come!"

"You seem anxious to get into deeper trouble," remarked the aunt, who had been in the house for a week only, and who was not sympathetic toward children.

"I believe, Aunt Phoebe, that you would like to see me whipped," said the boy, a little indignantly, "but you won't."

"I must confess," replied the aunt, "that I think a little whipping would not be out of place. If you were my child, I am quite sure you would not escape."

"I am not your child, and I do not want to be. Father is good, and he loves me."

Again the bell rang, and again the boy left the sofa and went to the door.

"It's Father!" he exclaimed.

"Ah, Richard!" was the kindly greeting, as Mr. Gordon took the hand of his boy. "But what is the matter, my son? You don't look happy."

"Won't you come in here?" Richard drew his father into the library. Mr. Gordon sat down, still holding Richard's hand.

"You are in trouble, my son. What has happened?"

Richard's eyes filled with tears as he looked into his father's face. He tried to answer, but his lips quivered. Then he opened the door of a glass case and brought out the fragments of a broken statue that had been sent home only the day before. A frown came over Mr. Gordon's face as Richard set the pieces on a table.

"Who did this, my son?" was asked in an even voice.

"I threw my ball in the room once, only once, in forgetfulness." The poor boy's tones were husky and tremulous.

For a little while Mr. Gordon sat controlling himself and collecting his disturbed thoughts. Then he said cheerfully:

"What is done, Richard, can't be helped. Put the broken pieces away. You have had trouble enough about it, I can see. I will not add a word to increase your distress."

"Oh, Father!" And the boy threw his arms about his father's neck. "You are so good."

Five minutes later Richard entered the sitting room with his father. Aunt Phoebe looked up expecting to see two shadowed faces, but she did not find them. She was puzzled.

"That was very unfortunate," she said a little while after Mr. Gordon came in. "It was such an exquisite work of art. It is hopelessly ruined. I think Richard was a naughty boy."

"We have settled that, Aunt Phoebe," was the mild, but firm, answer of Mr. Gordon. "It is one of our rules in this house to get *into the sunshine as soon as possible.*"

Into the sunshine as quickly as possible! It's the best way!

JOE BENTON'S COALS OF FIRE

It was a lovely morning; the sun was shining brightly, and the air was fragrant with violets and lilacs when Joe Benton sprang out the back door, shouting for joy over the anticipated pleasures of the holiday. "I'll have time to run to the brook before breakfast and see if my boat is all right," he said to himself. "We boys are to meet and launch her at nine o'clock, and the captain ought to be up on time."

So Joe hastened down to the cave where the precious boat was hidden. As he neared the place, an exclamation of surprise escaped him. There were signs of some intruder, and the big stone before the cave had been rolled away. Hastily drawing forth his treasure, he burst into loud cries of dismay; for there was the beautiful little boat which Cousin Herbert had given him, with its gay sails split into many shreds, and a large hole bored in the bottom.

Joe stood for a moment, motionless with grief and surprise; then, with a face as red as a peony, he burst forth:

"I know who did it! It was Fritz Brown, and he was angry because I didn't ask him to come to the launching. But I'll pay him back for this," said Joe. Hastily pushing back the ruined boat, he went a little farther down the road. He fastened a piece of string across the footpath a few inches from the ground and carefully hid himself in the bushes.

Presently a step was heard, and Joe eagerly peeped out. How provoking! Instead of Fritz, it was Cousin Herbert, the last person he cared to see. Joe tried to lie very quiet; but it was all in vain. Cousin Herbert's sharp eyes caught a curious movement in the bushes, and, brushing them right and left, he soon came upon Joe. "How's this?" cried he, looking straight into the boy's face; but Joe answered not a word. "You're not ashamed to tell me what you were doing?"

"No, I'm not," said Joe sturdily, after a short pause. "I'll tell you the whole story." Out it tumbled, down to the closing threat. "I mean to make him smart for it," said Joe.

"What do you mean to do?"

"You see, Fritz carries a basket of eggs to the store every morning, and I plan to trip him over this string, and make him smash all of them."

Now Joe knew well enough that he was not showing the right spirit, and he muttered to himself, "Now for a good scolding;" but to his great surprise Cousin Herbert said quietly: "Well, I think Fritz does need some punishment; but this string is an old trick. I can tell you something better than that."

"What?" cried Joe eagerly.

"How would you like to put a few coals of fire on his head?"

"What, and burn him?" said Joe doubtfully.

Cousin Herbert nodded with a queer smile.

Joe clapped his hands. "Now that's just the thing, Cousin Herbert. You see, his hair is so thick he wouldn't get burned much before he'd have time to shake them off but I'd like to see him jump once. Tell me how to do it, quick!"

"If your enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: for you shall heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward you," said Cousin Herbert gravely. "I think that's the best kind of punishment Fritz could have."

Joe's face lengthened terribly. "Now, that's no punishment at all."

"Try it once," said Cousin Herbert. "Treat Fritz kindly, and I am certain that he will feel so ashamed and unhappy he would far rather you had given him a severe beating." Joe was not really a bad boy at heart; but he was now in an ill temper, and he said sullenly: "You said this kind of coals would burn, and they don't at all."

"You're mistaken about that," said his cousin cheerily. "I have known such coals to burn up a great amount of rubbish—malice, envy, ill feeling, revenge, and I don't know how much more—and then leave some cold hearts feeling as warm and pleasant as possible."

Joe drew a long sigh. "Well, tell me a good coal to put on Fritz's head, and I'll see about it."

"You know," said Herbert, smiling, "Fritz is poor and he can seldom buy himself a book, although he loves to read. Now you have quite a library. Suppose—ah, well, I won't suppose anything about it! I'll leave you to find your own coal; but be sure to kindle it with love, for no other fire burns so brightly and so long." With a cheery "good-by," Herbert sprang over the fence and was gone.

Before Joe had time to collect his thoughts, he saw Fritz coming down the lane with a basket of eggs in one hand and a pail of milk in the other.

For one moment, the thought crossed Joe's mind: "What a smash it would have made if Fritz had fallen over the string!" Then he stopped, glad that the string was safe in his pocket.

Fritz looked uncomfortable when he first caught sight of Joe; but the boy began abruptly: "Fritz, have you much time to read now?"

"Sometimes," said Fritz, "when I've driven the cows home, and done all my work; but the trouble is, I've read everything I can get hold of."

"How would you like to take my new book of travels?"

Fritz's eyes danced. "Say, would you let me? I'd be careful with it!"

"Yes," answered Joe, "and perhaps I've some others you'd like to read." Then he added shyly: "Fritz, I would ask you to come and help sail my boat today; but someone has torn up the sails, and made a hole in the bottom. Who do you suppose did it?"

Fritz's head dropped, but after a moment he looked up, and said: "I did it, Joe; but I can't begin to tell you how sorry I am. You did not know I was so mean when you promised me the books."

"Well, I rather thought you did it," said Joe slowly.

"And yet you—" Fritz couldn't get any further. He rushed off without another word.

"That coal does burn. I know Fritz would rather I had smashed every egg in his basket than to have offered him that book." Then Joe went home with a light heart, hungry for his breakfast.

When the captain and the crew of the little vessel met at the appointed hour, they found Fritz there before them trying to repair the damage. As soon as he saw Joe, he hurried to present him with a beautiful little flag he had bought for the boat with part of his egg money that morning. The boat was repaired, and everything turned out as Herbert had said. Joe found that the more he used of this curious kind of coal, the larger supply he had on hand—kind thoughts, kind words, and kind actions.

Joe's playmates, who saw that he was always happy, studied the secret, and when any trouble came up, someone would say: "Let us try a few of Joe Benton's coals." It was astonishing to see how quickly their hearts grew warm toward each other.

JOE GREEN'S LUNCH

It was a little past noon, and a merry group of boys were seated on the grass under the trees that shaded the academy playgrounds. A little later they would be scattered in every direction at their play, but first they must attend to the contents of the well-filled pails and baskets of lunch.

"I should like to know," said Howard Colby, "why Joe Green never comes out here to eat his dinner with the rest of us. He always sneaks off somewhere until we get through."

"Guess he brings so many goodies he is afraid we will rob him," said another.

"Pooh!" said Will Brown, throwing himself back upon the grass; "more likely he doesn't bring anything at all. I heard my father say the family is badly pinched since Mr. Green was killed. Mother said she didn't pity them, for folks had no business to be poor and proud."

"Well," said Sam Merrill, "I know that Mary Green asked my mother to let her have some sewing to do; but then, folks do that sometimes who aren't poor."

"And Joe is wearing patched pants," said Howard Colby.

"I tell you what, boys," said Will Brown, "let's watch tomorrow to see what the fellow does bring. You know he is always in his seat by the time the first bell rings, and we can get a peep into his basket before roll call."

The boys agreed to this, all but Ned Collins, who had sat quietly eating his dinner. He had taken no part in the conversation. Now he simply remarked, as he brushed the crumbs from his lap: "I can't see what fun there will be in that, and it looks mean and sneaking to me. I'm sure it's none of your business what Joe brings for dinner or where he goes to eat it."

"You're always nicey nice, Ned Collins," said Will Brown contemptuously.

Ned could not bear to be laughed at. His eyes flashed for a minute, and then he sprang up, shouting: "Hurrah, boys, for football!" In five minutes the whole playground was in an uproar of fun and frolic.

The next morning at the first stroke of the bell a half dozen roguish faces peeped into the classroom. Sure enough, there was Joe Green, busily plying his pencil over the problems of the algebra lesson. It was but the work of an instant to hurry into the cloakroom, and soon the whole group was pressing around Will Brown, as he held the mysterious basket in his hand. Among them, in spite of the remonstrance of yesterday, was Ned Collins.

"It's big enough to hold a day's rations for a regiment," said Harry Forbes, as Will pulled out a nice white napkin. Next came a whole newspaper—a large one, too; and then, in the bottom of the basket, was one cold potato. That was all. Will held it up with a comical grimace, and the boys laughed loudly.

"See here," said Howard, "let's throw it away, and fill the basket with coal. It will be such fun to see him open it!"

The boys agreed, and the basket was soon filled, and the napkin placed carefully on the top. Before the bell rang, they were on their way to class.

Ned Collins was the last one to leave the room. No sooner did the last head disappear, than, quick as a flash, he emptied the coal into the box again, replaced the paper, and half filled the basket, large as it was, with the contents of the bright tin pail that Aunt Sally delighted to store with dainties for his dinner. Ned was in his seat almost as soon as the rest, and all through the forenoon he looked and felt as guilty as the others, as he saw the sly looks and winks they exchanged. Noon came, and there was the usual rush to the cloakroom for dinner baskets; but instead of going out to the yard, the boys lingered about the door and the hall. Straight by them marched Ned Collins, his pail under his arm.

"Hello, Ned!" said Sam Merrill. "Where are you going now?"

"Home," said Ned, laughing. "I saw Aunt Sally making some extra goodies to eat this morning, and they can't cheat me out of my share."

"Ask me to go, too," shouted Howard Colby. At that moment the boys spied Joe Green carrying his basket into the schoolroom.

"I should think he'd suspect something," whispered Will Brown; "that coal must be awful heavy."

Joe disappeared into the schoolroom, and the curious eyes that peeped through the crack of the door were soon rewarded by seeing him open his basket.

"Hope his dinner won't lie hard on his stomach," whispered Howard Colby. But apparently Joe only wished to get his paper to read, for he took it by the corner, and pulled; but it stuck fast. He looked in with surprise, and then took out, in a sort of bewildered way, a couple of Aunt Sally's fat sandwiches, one of the delicious round pies he had so often seen in Ned's hands, a bottle of milk, and some nuts and raisins. It was a dinner fit for a king, so Joe thought, and so did the boys as they peeped from their hiding place. But Joe did not offer to taste it; he only sat there and looked at it. Then he laid his head on his desk; and Freddy Wilson, one of the smaller of the boys, whispered, "I guess he's praying," so they all stole away to the playground, without speaking a word.

"That's some of Ned Collins' work," said Will Brown, after a while. "It's just like him."

"I'm glad of it, anyway," said Sam Merrill. "I've felt mean all forenoon. The Greens are not to blame for having only cold potatoes to eat, and I don't wonder Joe didn't want all us fellows to know it." Will Brown began to feel uncomfortable.

"Father says Mr. Green was a brave man," said Sam Merrill, "and that he wouldn't have been killed, if he hadn't thought of everyone else before himself."

"I tell you what," said good-natured Tom Granger, "I move that we give three cheers to Ned Collins."

The boys sprang to their feet, and, swinging their caps in the air, gave three hearty cheers for Ned Collins. Even Will Brown joined in the chorus, with a loud "hurrah."

Later that day, Sam Merrill explained the whole matter to Ned; but he only replied: "I've often heard Aunt Sally say it's poor fun that must be earned by hurting someone's feelings."

LARRY DEAN'S REFERENCES

I do not believe two more excellent people could be found than Gideon Randal and his wife. To lift the fallen and to take care of those in need was their constant habit and delight. They often sacrificed their own comforts for the benefit of others. In vain their friends protested at this but, of course, Gideon Randal's unfailing reply was, "I think there's enough left to carry Martha and me through life, and some left over. What we give to the poor, we lend to the Lord, and if a dark day comes, He will provide."

The "dark day" came; but it was not until he had reached the age of 70 years. As old age came upon him, and his little farm became less productive, he began to go more and more into debt. Being forced to raise money, he had borrowed a thousand dollars from a businessman named Mr. Harrington, putting his house up for security. As long as Gideon Randal made his payments on a regular basis, or at least paid the interest, Mr. Harrington was happy. However, Mr. Harrington died suddenly, and his son, who was not a very kind man and, worse yet, was also greedy, wrote Mr. Randal, demanding payment of the whole mortgage.

The old man pleaded with him for more time, but the young Mr. Harrington became so demanding he was threatening to take away Mr. Randal's home unless payment were made within a given time.

"Martha," Mr. Randal said to his wife, "young Harrington is a hard man. He has me in his power, and he seems to have no problem with ruining me. I think I should go and talk with him, telling him how little I have. It may be he will pity two old people, and allow us better terms."

"But husband, you are not used to traveling; Harrowtown is a hundred miles away, and you are old and feeble too."

"True, wife; but I can talk much better than I can write, and besides, Luke Conway lives there, you remember. I took an interest in him when he was a poor orphan boy; perhaps he will advise and help us, now that we are in trouble."

At last, since he felt that he must go, Mrs. Randal reluctantly consented, and carefully prepared all that he would need for his journey.

The next morning was warm and sunny for November, and the old man started for Harrowtown.

"Gideon," called Mrs. Randal as he walked slowly down the road, "be sure to take tight hold of the railing, when you get in and out of the train."

"I'll be careful, Martha," and with one more "goodbye" wave of his hand, the old man hurried on to catch the bus, which was to carry him to the station. But misfortune met him at the very outset. The bus driver had to stop and change a tire, when one of them went flat; this caused such a delay that Mr. Randal missed the morning train, and the next did not come for several hours.

It was afternoon when he finally started. He became anxious and weary from waiting so long, and after three stations were passed, he became nervous and worried.

"How long before we reach Harrowtown?" he asked, stopping the busy conductor.

"At half past eight."

Another question was upon Mr. Randal's lips, but the conductor was gone. "Not reach there until evening!"

"How long before we reach Harrowtown!" he exclaimed to himself in dismay, "and pitch dark, for there's no moon now; I shall not know where to go!"

Presently the conductor passed again. "Mr. Conductor, will you kindly tell me when to get out?"

I've never been to Harrowtown, and I do not want to stop at the wrong place."

"Give yourself no uneasiness," was the polite reply, "I'll let you know; I will not forget you."

Soothed by this assurance, the old man settled back in his seat and finally went to sleep.

In the seat behind him sat a tall, handsome boy. His name was Albert Gregory. He was bright and intelligent, but there was an expression of cruelty about his mouth, and a look about his eyes that was cold and unfeeling. This lad saw the old man fall asleep, and he nudged his companion

"Hey, John, in a while I'm going to play a good joke on that old country greenhorn, and you'll see 'the fun.'"

On rushed the train; mile after mile was passed. Daylight faded, and the lights came on in the cars, and still the old man slept, watched by his soon-to-be tormentor and the other boy, who wanted to see "the fun."

At last the train began to slow down. They were nearing a station. Albert sprang up and shook Mr. Randal violently.

"Wake up! wake up!" he called sharply. "This is Harrowtown. You must get off here!"

Thus roughly roused, the old man started from his seat and gazed around in a bewildered way. The change from light to darkness, the unaccustomed awakening on a moving train, and the glare of the lights added to his confusion.

"What did you say, boy?" he asked helplessly.

"This is Harrowtown, the place where you want to stop. You must get off. Be quick, or you'll miss your stop."

Mr. Randal knew it was not the conductor who had aroused him; but, supposing Albert to be an employee of the train, he hurried to the door with tottering steps. The name of the station was called at the other end of the car, a name quite unlike that of "Harrowtown," but his dull ears did not notice it. He got off upon the platform, and before he could recover himself or knew his error, the train was again in motion.

Albert was in ecstasies over the success of his "joke," and shook all over with laughter, in which, of course, his companion joined. "Oh what hoot!" he cried, "isn't it, John?"

John assented that it was very funny indeed.

Neither of the boys had noticed that the seat lately occupied by the poor old man had just been taken by a fine looking gentleman, wrapped in a heavy cloak, who appeared to be absorbed in his own thoughts, but who really heard every word they said.

They kept up a brisk conversation, Albert speaking in a loud tone, for he was feeling very merry. "Ha, ha, ha !—but I did think the old fool would hear the brakeman call the station, though. I didn't suppose I could get him any farther than the door. To think of his clambering clear out on the platform, and getting left! He believed every word I told him. What a delicious old simpleton!"

And having run out of anything more to say of that matter, he began to boast of his plans and prospects.

"I don't believe you stand much of a chance there; they say Luke Conway's awful particular," the stranger heard John remark.

"Oh shut up!" cried Albert. "Particular! That's just it, and that makes my chance all the better. I've brought the kind of recommendations that a particular man wants, you see."

"But there will be lots of other fellows trying for the place."

"Don't care if there's fifty," said Albert, "I'd come in ahead of 'em all. I've got testimonials of character and qualifications from Prof. Howe, Prof. Joseph Lee, Dr. Henshaw, and Mr. H. M. Jenks, the great railroad contractor. His name alone is enough to secure me the situation."

At this, the gentleman on the next seat turned and gave Albert a quick, searching glance. But the conceited boy was too much occupied with himself to notice the movement, and kept on talking. Now and then the thought of the victim whom he had so cruelly tricked seemed to come back and amuse him amazingly.

"Wonder where the old man is now. Ha, ha! Do you suppose he has found out where Harrowtown is? Oh, but wasn't it rich to see how scared he was when I awoke him? And how he jumped and scrambled out of the car! I never saw anything so hilarious."

Here the stranger turned again and shot another quick glance, this time from indignant eyes, and his lips parted as if about to utter a stern reproof. But he did not speak.

We will now leave Albert and his fellow-travelers, and follow good Gideon Randal.

It was quite dark when he stepped from the cars. "Can you tell me where I can find Mr. Aaron Harrington?" he inquired of a man at the station.

"There's no such man living here, to my knowledge," was the reply.

"What, isn't this Harrowtown?" asked Mr. Randal, in great consternation.

"No, it is Whipple Village."

"Then I got out at the wrong station. What shall I do?" in a voice of deep distress.

Go right to the hotel and stay there until the train goes in the morning," said the man, pleasantly.

There was no alternative. Mr. Randal passed a restless night at the hotel, and at an early hour he was again at the station, waiting for the train. His face was pale, and his eye wild and anxious. "The bus had a flat, and I missed the first train," thought he, "and then that boy told me to get out here. I've made a bad beginning and I'm afraid this trip will have a bad ending."

There were many passengers walking to and fro on the platform, waiting for the cars to come.

Among them was a plain-featured, honest-looking boy, who had been accompanied to the station by his mother and younger brother and sister. Just as they were telling him "goodbye," his mother said, "Larry, look at that pale, sad old man. I don't believe he is used to traveling. Perhaps you can help him along."

As the train came into the station, the young man stepped up to Mr. Randal, and said, respectfully:

"Allow me to assist you, sir." Then he took hold of his arm, and guided him into the car to a seat.

"Thank you, my boy. I'm getting old and clumsy, and a little help from a young hand comes timely. Where are you going, if I may ask?"

"To Harrowtown, sir. I saw an ad for a job as a clerk in a store, and I'm going to try to get the position. I need a good-paying summer job. My name is Larry Dean."

"Ah? I'm sure I wish you success, Larry, for I believe you're a good boy. You are going to the same place I am. I want to find Aaron Harrington, but I've had two mishaps. I don't know what's coming next."

"I'll show you right where his office is. I've been in Harrowtown a good many times."

Half an hour later, the brakeman shouted the name of the station where they must stop. Larry assisted Mr. Randal off the train, and walked with him to the principal street. "Here's Mr. Harrington's office," said he.

"Oh, yes, thank you kindly. And now could you tell me where Mr. Luke Conway's place of business is?"

"Why, that's the very gentleman I'm going to see," said Larry. "His place is just round the corner, only two blocks off."

Mr. Randal was deeply interested. He turned and shook the boy's hand, warmly. "Larry," he said, "Mr. Conway knows me. I am going to see him in a little bit. I am really obliged to you for your politeness, and wish I could do something for you. I hope Mr. Conway will give you the position, for you deserve it. If you apply before I get there, tell him Gideon Randal is your friend. Goodbye."

Fifteen minutes later, we find Larry waiting in the accounting office of Luke Conway's store. Albert Gregory had just come in before him. The businessman was writing, and he had requested the boys to be seated a short time, till he was at a stopping point. Before he finished his work, a slow, feeble step was heard approaching, and an old man stood in the doorway.

"Luke, don't you remember me?" The businessman looked up at the sound of the voice. Then he sprang from his chair and grasped the old man's hands in both his own.

"Mr. Randal! Welcome, a thousand times welcome, my benefactor!" he exclaimed. Seating his guest, Mr. Conway asked about his health and comfort, and talked with him as tenderly as a loving son. It was very clear to the businessman that the good old man had come upon hard times, and he soon made it easy for him to unburden his mind.

"Yes, Luke, I am in trouble. Aaron Harrington owns a mortgage on my farm. I can't pay him, and he threatens to take my home," said Mr. Randal, with a quivering lip. "I went to his office, but didn't find him in, and I thought may be you'd advise me what to do."

"Mr. Randal," answered the businessman, laying his hand on the old man's shoulder, "almost thirty years ago when I was cold, hungry, and friendless, you took me in and fed me. Your good wife—God bless her!—She made me a suit of clothes with her own hands. You found me work, and you gave me money when I set out on the world alone. Much if not all that I am in life I owe to your sympathy and help, my kind old friend. Now I am rich and you must let me cancel my debt. I shall pay your mortgage today. You shall have your home free again.

Mr. Randal wiped great hot tears from his cheeks, and said, in a husky voice, "It is just as I told Martha. I knew, if we lent our money to the Lord, when a dark day came, He would provide."

You can imagine the different feelings of the two boys, as they watched what was going on between the two men. When the old man had first come in, Albert had looked down at him with a look of derision, but that soon changed to an expression of sickly dismay when the old man was so warmly greeted by the businessman. But his usual assurance soon returned. He thought it unlikely that Mr. Randal would recognize him in the daylight, and he determined to put on a bold front.

For a minute the two men continued in conversation. Mr. Conway called up pleasant memories of "Aunt Martha," his boy-life on the farm, and the peace and stillness of the country town. He thought a railway ride of a hundred miles must be quite a hardship for a quiet old man. "It was a long way for you," he said, "Did you have a comfortable journey?"

"Well, I can't quite say that. First, the bus broke down and delayed me. Then I fell asleep on the train, and a boy played a trick on me by waking me up and making me get out at the wrong station. Then I had to stay over night in Whipple Village. To tell the truth I had a great deal of troubles and worries with one thing and another, getting here; but it's all right now," he added, with a radiant face.

"You shall go with me to my house and rest, as soon as I have dismissed these boys," said Mr. Conway, earnestly; and turning to Albert and Larry, who anxiously waited, he spoke to them about their errand.

"I suppose you came because you saw my ad in the paper?"

"Yes, sir," replied both, simultaneously.

"Very well. I believe you came in first," he began, turning to Albert. "What is your name?"

"I am Albert Gregory, sir. I think I can suit you. I've brought references of ability and character from some of the first men—Mr. H. M. Jenks, Mr. Joseph Lee, Dr. Henshaw, and others. Here are my letters of recommendation," holding them out for Mr. Conway to take.

"I don't care to see them," returned the businessman, coldly. "I have seen you before. I understand your character well enough for the present."

He then addressed a few words to Larry Dean.

"I would be very glad to work for you," said Larry. "My mother is poor, and I need a good summer job to both help her and save for college, but I haven't any references."

"Yes, you have," said old Mr. Randal, who was waiting for an opportunity to say that very thing. And then he told the businessman how polite and helpful Larry had been to him.

Mr. Conway fixed his eyes severely upon the other boy. The contrast between him and young Dean was certainly worth a lesson.

"Albert Gregory," said the businessman, "I occupied the seat in the car in front of you last evening. I heard you exultingly and wickedly boasting how you had deceived a distressed and helpless old man. Mr. Randal, is this the boy who lied to you, and caused you to get out at the wrong station?"

"I declare! Now I do remember him. It is! I'm sure it is!" exclaimed the old gentleman, fixing his eyes fully upon the blushing face of the young man.

It was useless for Albert to attempt to make excuses for himself; his stammered excuses just stuck in his throat, and he was glad to hide his embarrassment by leaving as soon as he could. He simply slunk away, taking all his "references" with him.

"Larry" said Mr. Conway kindly, "I will be very glad to employ you in my store. You will have good pay if you do well, and I am sure you will. You may begin work at once."

Larry's eyes danced with joy as he left the accounting office to receive his instructions from the head clerk.

Mr. Conway furnished the money to pay the debt due to Mr. Harrington by Mr. Randal, and a heavy load was lifted from the good old farmer's heart. He remained a visitor two or three days in Mr. Conway's house, where he was treated with the utmost respect and attention.

Mr. Conway also purchased for him a suit of warm clothes, and an overcoat, and sent his personal assistant with him on his return journey to see him safely home. He did not forget good Mrs. Randal either. She received a handsome present in money from Mr. Conway, and a message full of grateful affection. Nothing ever after occurred to disturb the lives of the aged and worthy pair.

Albert Gregory secured an excellent situation in New York, but his false character, and his total disregard of others' feelings and rights, made him as hateful to his employers as to all his associates, and it soon became necessary for him to seek another place.

He has changed places many times since, and his career has been an unhappy one—another example of the results of frivolous habits and a heartless nature.

Larry Dean is now a successful businessman, a partner of Mr. Conway, and occupies a high position in society, as an honorable, enterprising man. But best of all, he is a Christian, and finds deep satisfaction and happiness in the service of Him who has said,—

"You shall rise up before the gray-headed, and honor the face of the old man, and you shall fear your God." Lev. 19:32.

THE LION AND THE MOUSE

Aesop

Here is one of the oldest and best-loved stories of kindness paid and repaid. From it we learn that compassion lies within the power of both the mighty and the meek. Kindness is not a feeble virtue.

One day a great lion lay asleep in the sunshine. A little mouse ran across his paw and wakened him. The great lion was just going to eat him up when the little mouse cried, "Oh, please, let me go, sir. Some day I may help you."

The lion laughed at the thought that the little mouse could be of any use to him. But he was a good-natured lion, and he set the mouse free.

Not long after, the lion was caught in a net. He tugged and pulled with all his might, but the ropes were too strong. Then he roared loudly. The little mouse heard him, and ran to the spot.

"Be still, dear Lion, and I will set you free. I will gnaw the ropes."

With his sharp little teeth, the mouse cut the ropes, and the lion came out of the net.

"You laughed at me once," said the mouse. "You thought I was too little to do you a good turn. But see, you owe your life to a poor little mouse."

LITTLE LILY'S GOOD TIME

"Dear! I wish I didn't have to mind my mother. When I grow up and have a little girl, I'll let her do as she pleases. If she wants to go out to play after school, I won't make her come straight home."

So said Lily as she walked slowly toward school, feeling very out of sorts because her mother thought it was not safe for a child who had just recovered from a fever, to play in the brook that afternoon.

At home, Lily's mother said to herself, "I wonder if it would be safe for Lily to play in the water. I was sorry to disappoint her, but I was afraid she would get cold. I think tomorrow I shall give her permission to do as she pleases. That will let her see if she is as happy as she thinks she will be."

That night Lily came home and began to fret. "I know I would not have caught cold playing in the brook," she whined.

"Tomorrow you may do as you please in everything, Lily," her mother said.

"Do you really mean it?" exclaimed the girl joyfully.

"Certainly, my dear."

"Oh, won't I have a wonderful time! How I wish it were tomorrow now!"

The next morning after breakfast Lily said, "Now, mamma, I don't believe I'll go to school today."

"Do as you please, my dear," said mother.

The girl went outdoors, and presently mother saw her swinging under the tree. In about half an hour she reappeared, saying, "Mother, will you please give me something to eat?"

"Take anything you please," replied her mother. Lily helped herself to a generous slice of fruit cake.

The morning hours dragged heavily for the girl. She tried one pastime after another, but found that play alone was not pleasant. In fact, she would have been glad if her mother had given her some work; but she was too proud to acknowledge herself wrong and ask for some task.

After dinner she said, "I believe I'll go to school this afternoon, but don't be worried if I don't get home until suppertime."

"Very well," said her mother, smiling quietly.

After school, some of Lily's friends said, "Come with us, Lily, and wade in the brook; you don't know what fun we have."

The girl hesitated. Something within her told her she ought not to go; but, stifling the little voice, she hurried after the girls. Somehow she did not enjoy the wading as much as she had expected. The girls splattered water over her; and at last, one of the larger girls, for the fun of it, pushed her down into the water. Then she began to cry, and her classmates called her a crybaby and told her to run home to her mother. This she did willingly; and just before dark her mother saw a forlorn-looking little girl, her wet clothes hanging closely about her, coming to the front door.

What do you suppose her mother did then? Did she refuse to help her? Did she say that Lily had done as she pleased all day, and might do as she pleased about getting warm and dry? No, indeed; she helped the girl change her wet clothes for dry ones, and gave her a hot supper. Then she wrapped her up warm and cozy in her bed. As mother was bending over her for a good-night kiss, Lily threw her arms around her neck, and said, "I think it was good of God to give little girls mothers to take care of them, for they know so much more than children."

Adapted from a story in Choice Stories for Children

MY FIRST THEFT

Many years ago, when a boy of seven or eight years, my home was near a beautiful village in the central part of the State of New York. Although it was but a humble cottage, the flowers and shrubs flourishing so luxuriantly under the tender care of my mother, made it seem a paradise in my young eyes, and even now I remember the home of my boyhood as the sweetest spot on earth.

My father was in humble circumstances, and by close and laborious study earned the daily bread of his family, ever looking forward to the time when the reward of his labor should bring us peace and plenty.

I was an only son, and acknowledged by all to be a growing image of my father, and although almost idolized by him, his poverty prevented the gratification of very many of my childish humors, and saved me from the fate of far too many idolized children. He was a true Christian, always endeavoring to instill good and holy principles into the minds of my little sister and myself.

The distance between my father's house and the village was about half a mile; and a most delightful walk it was in summer. To take the hand of my father and accompany him in his visits to the village store, listening to his stories and carrying some little parcel for my sister or mother, was one of my greatest pleasures.

There was one thing, however, which I longed for more than anything else, and which I imagined would make me supremely happy. It was a jackknife. Then I would not be obliged to borrow Father's every time I wished to cut a string or a stick, but could whittle whenever I chose and as much as I pleased.

Dreams of kites, bows and arrows, boats, etc, all manufactured with the aid of that whittling blade, bothered me by day and night. I had asked my father to buy me one, but he could only promise to grant my request at some future time, which to me seemed ages hence.

One of these visits, the sequel of which forms the subject of this tale, I shall never forget. It was a beautiful morning in June that my father called me and gave me leave, if I wished, to go with him to the store. I was delighted, and taking his hand we started. The birds sang sweetly on every bush and everything looked so gay and beautiful that my heart fairly leaped with joy. I was very happy. After our arrival at the village, and while my father was occupied in purchasing some articles in a remote part of the store, my attention was drawn to a man who was asking the price of various jackknives which lay on the counter. As this was a very interesting subject to me, I approached, intending only to look at them.

I picked up one, opened it, examined it, tried the springs, felt the edge of the blade with my thumb, and thought I could never cease admiring their polished surface. Oh, if it were only mine, thought I, how happy I should be! Just at this moment, happening to look up, I saw that the merchant had gone to change a bill for his customer, and no one was observing me. For fear that I might be tempted to do wrong, I started to replace the knife on the counter, but an evil spirit whispered, "Put it in your pocket; quick!" Without stopping to think of the crime or its consequences, I hurriedly slipped it in my pocket, and as I did so felt a blush of shame burning my cheek, but the store was rather dark and no one noticed it, nor did the merchant miss the knife.

We soon started for home, my father giving me a parcel to carry. As we walked along my thoughts continually rested on the knife, and I kept my hand in my pocket all the time, from a sort of guilty fear that it would be seen. This, together with carrying the bundle in my other hand, made it difficult for me to keep pace with my father. He noticed it, and gave me a lecture about walking with my hands in my pockets.

Ah! how different were my thoughts then from what they were when passing the same scenes a few hours before. The song of the birds seemed joyous no longer, but sad and

sorrowful as if chiding me for my wicked act. I could not look my father in the face, for I had been heedless of his precepts, broken one of God's commandments, and become a *thief*. As these thoughts passed through my mind I could hardly help crying; but concealed my feelings and tried to think of the good times I would have with my knife. I could hardly say anything on my way home, and my father, thinking I was either tired or sick, kindly took my burden and spoke soothingly to me, his guilty son.

No sooner did we reach home than I retreated to a safe place, behind the house, to try the stolen knife. I had picked up a stick and was whittling it, perfectly delighted with the sharp blade which glided through the wood almost of itself, when suddenly I heard the deep, subdued voice of my father calling me by name, and on looking up saw him at the window directly over my head gazing down very sorrowfully at me.

The stick dropped from my hand and with the knife clasped in the other I proceeded into the house. I saw by his looks that he had divined all. I found him sitting in his armed chair looking very sorrowful. I walked directly to his side and in a low, calm voice he asked me where I got the knife. His gentle manner and kind tone went to my heart, and I burst into tears.

As soon as my voice would allow me, I made a full confession. He did not whip me, as some fathers would have done, but reprimanded me in such a manner that while I felt truly penitent for the deed—I loved him more than ever, and promised never, never to do the like again. In my father's company I then returned to the store, and on my knees begged the merchant's pardon, and promised never again to take what was not my own.

My father is long since dead; and never do I think of my first theft without blessing the memory of him whose kind teachings and gentle corrections have made it, thus far in my life, and *forever*, my last.

THE MYSTERIOUS RIDER

Grandma McAlpine was nearly 80 years of age, but she could remember almost everything about her childhood. How her grandchildren did love to listen to her!

One evening Frank and Bessie were visiting Grandma in her home. Soon they were trying to persuade her to tell them one of her grand old stories of the long ago.

"Please, Grandma!" urged Bessie. "Just one. We love to listen to your stories."

"Yes, please!" chimed in Frank. "You know, Grandma, that one you promised to tell us, about the mysterious rider."

A smile came over Grandma's face.

"All right then," said Grandma. "Make yourselves comfortable, and I'll tell you now."

Frank and Bessie seated themselves as close to Grandma as possible, and looked up expectantly into her face.

"It happened nearly 75 years ago this October," Grandma began. "I was a little girl of 5, but I remember it all as clearly as if it had happened yesterday."

"The real beginning of my story, however, came a hundred years or so before that. My great grandfather left the Old Country and set sail with his family for America. They settled in New England, and the children grew up and moved onto farms of their own. Into one of those families my father was born. When he was only a young man he heard people talking about a great wonderland in the West."

"Away out toward the sunset, it was said, there were thousands and thousands of square miles of marvelous forests where grew the greatest trees anyone had ever seen. The soil was so rich that it would grow finer wheat than any farmer had ever raised. Everything was there that could be desired."

"My father listened. It seemed promising to him. It was just what he wanted. He talked to my mother, and finally they decided to go."

"There were no trains then, and no roads. It meant a journey of 3,000 miles across open prairies, through forests and rivers and over high mountains. They had to crowd all their goods into one old covered wagon, drawn by two oxen."

"Tell us about the covered wagon," said Bessie.

"Well, just a word," said Grandma, "for we haven't got to the real story yet. Most of the covered wagons were built of strong, thick planks. They were made long and narrow, so that they could be used as boats in crossing rivers."

"Did you travel in one of those covered wagons?" asked Bessie, her eyes wide open with wonder.

"Yes, I surely did," said Grandma. "I was only 5 when we started out, but I can still see everything that happened on that long, long journey."

"How long did it take?" asked Frank.

"More than six months," said Grandma. "We left our home in April, as soon as the snow was gone. It was October before we caught sight of Mount Hood in Oregon, far, far in the West. Seven or eight other wagons were in our caravan, and day-by-day we moved slowly on, just as fast as the oxen could take us."

"Some days it was very, very hot, and then we would all get terribly thirsty. I think the oxen felt it more than we did, because they had most of the work to do. I remember one day we had traveled many miles without water. Suddenly the oxen stopped. They refused to haul the wagon another yard. Father took the yokes off them, and suddenly they started to run. They had either seen or smelled water more than a mile away, but they were too weary to take the wagon with them."

"Did you catch them?" asked Frank.

"Oh, yes," said Grandma. "That was easy. They only wanted to drink. Then we started off again."

"But the rider, the mysterious rider; when did he appear?" asked Bessie.

"Just you wait a minute," said Grandma. "We're coming to that all in good time. Some other things were to happen first. We rode on day after day, week after week, month after month. The poor oxen became more and more footsore and weary. Father did not dare to let them rest very much, for he knew that he had to get over the mountains before the snow began falling."

"The food began to give out. We were allowed just so much a day and no more, for Father said that if we were delayed and ran out of food, we would die on the way."

"The oxen became more and more tired, and Father grew more and more worried, as we moved on westward. At long last we started to climb the Cascade Mountains. I can't think how anyone ever found a way across, for there were no beautiful roads as there are today. It was all so wild and rocky that we were nearly jolted out of the wagon many times. Still we went on, climbing up and up, with the oxen panting and sweating in front, and Father shoving his hardest behind."

"At last we reached the summit. In the distance we could see Mount Hood, its white peak gleaming in the morning sun. We knew that there would still be many more days of travel, but it seemed to us that the journey was almost over."

"That very morning, something dreadful happened. One of our oxen died. The climb up the mountains had been too much for it. We were left with only one ox, and one could never pull that heavy wagon. Father was at his wits' end to know what to do. He talked to the people in the other wagons. They were sorry, but they could not do anything. Their oxen, too, were almost worn out, and their food was almost gone. They felt that they had to go on without us, and so they did."

"I shall never forget how we all felt when the last wagon had gone out of sight down the steep, rough trail. We were alone on the summit of the Cascade Mountains with no means of getting away, and with only enough food to last us two or three days."

"Night came on. It was very cold. Father wondered whether the snow would come, and what we would do then. He kindled a fire, Mother gave us something to eat, and I was put to bed. Father and Mother sat up and talked of what they could do."

"By and by Father said to Mother, 'Surely the great God who has brought us in safety all this long way through so many troubles will not desert us now. Let us kneel here on the mountaintop and tell Him of our plight.'"

"They knelt in the dark with the cold wind blowing around them, and told God all that had happened. They told Him how they trusted Him to take care of them. Then they arose, and soon after that they tried to sleep."

"The night wore on. The bright, cold stars looked down upon our little lonely camp. Dawn was just beginning to break when suddenly Father sat up. The silence had been broken by strange sounds."

"Ch'ppety-clop, chppety-clop, chppetyclop."

"Horses!" whispered Father."

"Do you think it's Indians?" whispered Mother, sitting up beside him."

"I don't know," said Father. "We must wait and see."

"They stood quietly beside the wagon, listening and watching as the sound of the horses' hooves came ever nearer and nearer."

"Suddenly out of the darkness came a voice. 'Hi there!' cried someone."

"Who is it?" called Father."

"A friend' was the answer."

"In the dim morning light Father could just make out the form of a man on horseback, with another horse beside him. He walked over toward the stranger."

"Are you in trouble?" asked the mysterious rider."

"We are," said Father. "Desperate trouble. One of our oxen has died, and we are stranded here with hardly any food left."

"The mysterious rider took us to his own home and fed us. Then he lent us another ox, so that we were able to reach the end of our journey in safety."

"What was the name of the mysterious rider?" asked Frank.

"He never told us," said Grandma. "He just said we were to call him the Colonel, which we have done ever since."

"But how did he happen to find you?" asked Bessie.

"Ah," said Grandma, that is the most wonderful part of the story, for there was no telephone in those days and no telegraph. All Father could do was to tell God and trust Him to do all the rest."

"All my life," she added, "I have never forgotten that terrible night on the mountain, and the mysterious rider who came to our rescue. Children, I want you always to remember that the great God whom we love and serve never forgets His own."

ONE MINUTE MORE

On a bright sunny day, while Ned sat at the breakfast table, he tried to get his mother or sister to tell him where they were all going.

"I'm as much in the dark as you are," said Carolyn. "I think that mother was afraid I would let out the secret, for she sometimes calls me her little chatterbox. We're to be ready at ten o'clock sharp."

"Well, I suppose we'll know in a few hours. Look, here comes Charley Wood. I promised to show him something in my workshop." Away ran Ned.

The boys played together until after nine o'clock; and then, instead of going directly to the house, to be on hand promptly at ten o'clock, Ned thought: "Oh, there's time enough for me to finish my kite."

Two or three times his eyes were upon his watch; but there were a few minutes to spare, he thought. When he looked again, he was startled to find that it was three minutes past ten. By the time he had his hat and rushed to the front room, he was five minutes late, and no one was there.

He could not believe that his mother would disappoint him for such a little delay, so he called for Carolyn. Then he ran to his mother's room to see if she were there, then out the front door; but no one was to be seen.

"Why did mother not tell me where she was going? Then I might have overtaken her. Now I don't know in which direction to go," mumbled Ned.

It was because of this that his mother had not told Ned where she was going. He was in the habit of trying to make up for lost time by hurrying at the last minute.

Mrs. Gray had planned a visit to her sister, who lived on a farm. Ned and Carolyn had once visited there and had a grand time with their cousins. They played in the hayloft, searched for eggs, helped feed the cattle, and rode the horses to water. They often begged mother to take them again; but she had many home cares and could not get away.

Poor Ned! When he found his mother and sister gone, he was a disappointed boy. Half ashamed to have Jane, the maid, see his tears or know how miserable he was, he went back to his play. He knew that if his mother returned, Carolyn would be sure to run out to the playhouse in search of him, so he stayed out there by himself until dinnertime. Jane called Ned to dinner. She had lived in the Gray home a long time and knew Ned's one failing. She had promised Mrs. Gray not to tell him where his mother and sister had gone, until dinnertime. The woman saw the boy with sad, downcast face enter the dining room. Seeing the table set for only one person, Ned was surprised, for his mother rarely stayed away all day.

The boy sat down to his lonely meal, and when Jane came in with a piece of pie, he asked why his mother was not home to dinner.

"Oh, Ned," she replied, "your mother won't be back today, or tomorrow either-no, not until Monday morning. She and Carolyn have gone to visit your Aunt Mary."

This was too much for the youth. Dropping knife and fork, he rushed upstairs to his room, where he flung himself on the bed and cried bitterly.

When he had recovered from the first burst of tears, he remembered his mother's request "not to forget," that she should expect him "in the front room at ten o'clock precisely." Now he understood that she must have started with Carolyn to the station at the very moment the

clock hands pointed to the hour. It was a good lesson. He knew his mother had not meant to be cruel to him, and he resolved to improve in promptness.

It was with bright, sunny face, from which all sadness had vanished, that Ned met his mother and sister when they reached home Monday morning. Mrs. Gray saw at once that the hard lesson she had been obliged to teach him had not been in vain.

PERSEVERANCE

One of the corporations of this city needed a young man in their factory. They tacked an advertisement on one of the local bulletin boards in a prominent place so that the boys could see it as they passed. The paper read, "Boy wanted. Call at the office tomorrow morning."

At the time indicated, a host of boys were waiting at the gate. All were admitted. But the overseer was a little perplexed as to the best way of choosing one from so many. He said, "Boys, I only want one, and here are a great many; how shall I choose?"

After thinking a moment, he invited them all into the yard, and driving a nail into one of the large trees, and taking a short stick, told them that the boy who could hit the nail with the stick, standing a little distance from the tree, should have the place.

The boys all tried hard, and, after three trials, each failed to hit the nail. The boys were told to come again the next morning; and this time, when the gate was opened, there was but one boy, who, after being admitted, picked up the stick, and throwing at the nail, struck it every time.

"How is this?" said the overseer. "What have you been doing?" And the boy, looking up with tears in his eyes, said, "You see, sir, I am a poor boy. I have no father, sir; and I wanted to get the job, and to help my mother all I can; and, after going home yesterday, I drove a nail into the barn, and I have been trying to hit it ever since; and I have come down this morning to try again."

The boy got the job. Many years have passed since then, and now that boy is a prosperous and a wealthy man; and at the time of the burning of the Pemberton Mills, he was the first to step forward with a gift of a thousand dollars to relieve the sufferers.

His success came by his perseverance.

RICHARD'S RUBBISH HEAP

Richard was as excited as a dog with 10 tails. He had always wanted to "invent" something, and now he had done so. His big "air balloon" was almost ready. He had been working on it for several weeks. There were just a few more odds and ends to fix. Then Richard would be able to set light to the cotton wool at the bottom and watch the big paper bag fill with hot air and soar away into the sky.

It was going to be a big day for Richard. All his friends were coming to see the great sight. Richard had told them all about it long before he had even worked out the design. Now he was sure their eyes would pop out when they saw the balloon completed.

It was something to see, too, I can tell you. Six feet high and four feet in diameter, it had been no small job to build. Richard had first made a framework of very light, strong wire. Then he had cut long strips of tissue paper of various colors into the proper shape, like slices of an orange peel. When the strips were pasted together, they made a big paper globe around the wire frame. What a task pasting the edges of that paper had been, and how many times it had torn or got stuck in the wrong place!

At the very bottom of the frame was a circle of wire. In the center of the circle of wire, supported on two cross wires, was a pad of cotton wool. This cotton wool was to be set alight, at the right moment, to heat the air inside the balloon. At last all the preparations were made. All Richard's friends were standing around waiting impatiently for the moment when the balloon would sail aloft.

Richard, however, was not in a hurry. He wanted to enjoy this moment of triumph. He had worked so hard, and had looked forward to this moment for so long. He kept explaining how he had designed the balloon. He told why he was sure it would rise into the air. He answered, over and over again, all the questions his friends asked about it.

At last, he applied a match to the cotton wool. It flared up, and all the children stood back to watch. The air inside became hotter and hotter, and the big tissue paper bag gradually filled out.

"It's lifting!" cried Richard excitedly. "It's lifting! It's going up!"

He was clapping his hands in excitement when suddenly a puff of wind blew the flame toward the tissue paper. There was no time to save it. In a moment, the whole balloon became a mass of flames and dropped to the ground.

Poor Richard! He was heartbroken. He ran indoors, anxious to get away from all his friends. They had expected so much of him and his much advertised "invention." He felt ashamed that he had said so much about it before it had been proved a success. So much work had gone into that balloon, too. It had taken all his spare time for weeks! Now there was nothing left but a heap of ashes and tangled wire.

Father found Richard in his bedroom, weeping his heart out. "Don't worry too much about it," said Father. "Much worse things happen in this old world. What really matters is not that the balloon is all burned up, but that you worked so hard trying to make something worthwhile."

"But it's all wasted," wailed Richard.

"No it is not wasted," said Father. "Think of all you have learned. Think of all that you have read about balloons, and all the little tricks that you've discovered about bending wire and sticking tissue paper together. All that isn't lost. It will prove useful someday; wait and see."

"But I really did want to invent something," sobbed Richard.

"I know," said Father, nothing gets invented as quickly as that. Think of Edison and how long he experimented before he invented the electric light. The same is true for his pho-

nograph and all the other priceless things he gave the world. Do you think he discovered them all at once? No indeed. He worked and worked over them, trying and failing and trying again."

"For weeks and weeks, as I did?" asked Richard.

"For years and years," comforted Father. "And he had so many failures that it is a wonder he carried on as he did. You should just see his rubbish heap."

"His rubbish heap?" questioned Richard in surprise.

"Yes indeed," said Father. "To this day it is shown to all who visit his old workshop. It is just outside the window by his bench. Every time an experiment went wrong, Edison would throw it out the window and start again. He didn't let failure discourage him, and neither must you. Build another balloon and a better one next time. Invent one that won't catch fire. Find out what was wrong and make it right. That's how all worthwhile inventions come about."

"I suppose that if Edison had a rubbish heap, I shouldn't worry too much about my little pile of ashes," said Richard, smiling at last.

"That's right," agreed Father. "That's the spirit that wins. Every real inventor has a rubbish heap. You've made a good start toward success already."

RONNY THE ROPE CLIMBER

*Do not lie to one another. Colossians 3:9a
It is impossible for God to lie. Hebrews 6:18*

It happened in the gym one afternoon. Mr. Skinner, the gym teacher, was talking to a group of boys near the long ropes that dangled from the ceiling.

"This is the last time this year that we are going to try to beat the school record," he said, "and I hope one of you will do it. You have sometimes come very close to it. You must each try a little bit harder."

The boys knew exactly what he meant. The school record stood at 2.1 seconds for climbing 15 feet from a standing start. Bob had done it once in 2.5 seconds, Dick in 2.4 seconds, Jerry in 2.6 seconds, and Ronny in 2.2 seconds. But no one, so far, had even equaled the record.

"Ready!" called Mr. Skinner, stopwatch in hand. "Bob first. One, two, three, go!"

Leaping as high as he could, Bob grabbed the rope and shot up faster than a monkey. He touched the board at the 15-foot mark, then slid down again and waited anxiously to hear the result.

"Just under 2.4 seconds," said Mr. Skinner. "Good try, Bob, but it's not quite good enough. Let's see what Dick can do."

Dick leaped at the rope and flew up and down again in less time than it takes to tell of it. But he too was not fast enough. "Exactly 2.3 seconds," said Mr. Skinner. "Now Jerry."

Jerry tried hard too, but didn't do any better than he had before.

"Well, Ronny, it's up to you," said Mr. Skinner. "All our hopes are on you now."

By this time quite a crowd of boys had drifted into the gym. All the school had heard about the rope contest and how near a few of the best climbers were to breaking the record. Now they pressed close to see what Ronny would do this time.

Ronny wanted to beat the record more than anyone there could guess. He wasn't the best of students. He never got very good grades, but he could climb a rope. And he thought that maybe this could be one way in which he could bring honor to the school he loved so much.

"Are you ready, Ronny?" asked Mr. Skinner.

"Ready," said Ronny.

"One, two, three, go!"

With a gleam in his eye and a grim look on his face, Ronny leaped at the rope. Hand over hand he sped to the top. A moment later he was sliding down again.

"Two seconds!" shouted Mr. Skinner excitedly. "Well done, my boy! Well done!"

A cheer went up all over the gym. Ronny had beaten the record!

"But Mr. Skinner," Ronny said. "There's something I have to tell you."

"What is it, Ronny?" asked Mr. Skinner. All the boys leaned forward to hear what Ronny had to say.

"I'm afraid I didn't touch the marker. I missed it by about a half-inch."

Only a half-inch! And nobody had seen. Not even Mr. Skinner. It would have been so easy for Ronny to have let everyone think he had touched the marker. But though it meant losing the record, Ronny wouldn't purposely mislead the others.

Mr. Skinner took him by the hand and looked him straight in the eye. "I'm proud of you, Ronny," he said. "More proud than you will ever know. You have brought more glory to your school today by your honesty than you ever could by your rope climbing."

By this time all the boys were crowding around, wondering what would happen.

"Didn't he break the record?" several asked.

"No," said Mr. Skinner. "He climbed in two seconds, but failed to touch the marker by a half-inch. He is disqualified."

There were groans all over the gym. "What a shame!" cried some.

"Why didn't you keep your mouth shut, Ronny?" said others.

Mr. Skinner blew his whistle. As silence fell, he said, "Because of my inaccuracy, I am going to give Ronny one more chance."

Cheers rang out again, with shouts of "Do it this time, Ronny."

Ronny stepped to the rope.

"Take an extra-high leap," Mr. Skinner said.

Up went Ronny, faster than ever, his hand hitting the marker so everyone could see it. Down he came like a streak of lightning.

"Magnificent!" cried Mr. Skinner, clapping Ronny on the back. "You did it in 1.9 seconds and broke the record all to pieces!"

Uncle Arthur's StoryTime

ROSE'S REVENGE

"BERTIE, here's your hat again, tossed down behind the couch on the porch, instead of being hung up in the closet. Soon you would have called the family to help you look for it. Come and pick it up. I am going to require you to stay indoors all day the next time your hat is out of place. Remember."

Bertie's mother spoke emphatically. Bertie, a little sheepishly, said to himself: "I had better try to remember. Mother means it; she doesn't often speak so seriously."

The boy was in the children's room, busy painting with his new box of colors. Rose, his little sister stood by watching him with admiring eyes. It was fun for a while; but Bertie tired of it by and by, and leaned back in his chair, wondering what to do next. Presently a bright thought struck him, and he jumped up.

"Rose, you put away those things for me, won't you?" he asked. "I haven't time."

"Where are you going all of a sudden?" asked Rose, beginning to pick up the paint brushes and color box.

"Oh, out with my sled! I promised Jimmy Lane and Ned Wheeler to go coasting with them this morning. I forgot about it until this minute. I wonder where my hat is."

"O Bertie, may I go with you?" begged Rose. "I'll clean this all up for you. I won't be a minute. Mother said I might go with you the next time you went to the hill, if you'd take care of me. You will, won't you, Bertie?"

"Not this time," answered her brother, looking under chairs and tables for his hat. "Do you suppose a fellow wants to be bothered with a girl to take care of when he's going in for fun?"

"I think you might take me," persisted Rose. "The other boys take their sisters, and I haven't had a good ride all winter. Please, Bertie. I'll help you find your hat."

"Thanks, but I've found it myself. For a wonder, it was on the hat-rack." Before Rose could put in another word, Bertie was off.

Poor Rose stood looking after him blankly for a moment. Then her face grew hot with anger. "He's a selfish boy," she said angrily, "and I know what I'll do."

Now, Rose didn't know exactly what she would do, and by the time her brother came in to dinner, she had quite forgiven him. She remembered it again the next day, though, when mother, coming into the children's room, said: "Quick, children, get ready. Mrs. Brown has called to offer me a sleigh ride, and she says there is room enough for you. But hurry, the horses mustn't stand waiting in the cold."

"Oh, boy," cried Bertie, jumping up in delight. "The Browns' big sleigh! Think, Rose! Buffalo robes, and bells! Where in the world is that hat now?"

Rose was putting on her woolen jacket and getting her mittens and her hat. She was so busy she had not heard what her brother was saying; and he, disgusted at seeing her all ready, broke out in loud reproach.

"Yes, that's all you care, you selfish thing," he cried. "You're all ready, and you don't care whether I have to stay or not. I haven't had a good sleigh ride this whole winter. Where is that old hat?"

"I know where his hat is. I saw it fall behind the big chest a little while ago. I suppose if I didn't tell him, and made him stay home, it would be my revenge." Rose thought, looking a little triumphantly at her brother. Then she said: "Hurry and put on your coat and mittens. I'll find your hat." She ran to the chest, and came back as her mother appeared at the door.

Bertie looked a little sheepish as he followed his mother and sister out to the sleigh, and all he said was a hurried whisper: "You're a good girl, Rose." He said to himself, quite in earnest this time, that he had been a selfish, careless boy, and that this sort of thing had to be changed right now. Rose's "revenge" had worked.

THE SENSITIVE PLANT

My mother and her three children came back to live with grandfather. The children were very glad to leave the city and go into the country, where the large green fields were, and shady trees to play under. Grandfather had a beautiful garden; he loved a garden dearly, and he had taken great pains to fill it with fine fruits and flowers. It stretched to the brink of a small creek. Here was a summerhouse covered with woodbine. It was very cool and pleasant in the summerhouse.

Grandfather gave Robert and myself a little spot for our garden. We were very much pleased to have a little garden of our own; every morning and evening we worked in it. Grandfather once said he thought it was the nicest-looking corner in his great garden. This made us very glad.

One day a gentleman came to see us from afar. He visited the garden and talked a great deal about gardens and flowers. We thought he loved them as much as grandfather and mother did. When he went away, he patted me on the head and said, "I will send you some seeds of the *Sensitive* plant, my child, to plant in your dear little spot."

The seeds came, and mother kept them carefully for the next spring, when we took more pains than usual in making our garden, on account of our beautiful new plant. No sooner was it planted than we longed to see it up; every morning we ran to look for it. "I hope it don't mean to cheat us," cried Robert, after waiting long in vain. Mamma said she did not think it meant any such thing; perhaps it was waiting for more sunshine.

After many days, something began to turn up the earth. "It's come, it's come! the *Sensitive* plant has come through," I cried in joy, racing to mamma's chamber; "it's got here at last; come and see, Mamma." Never was flower plant watched with deeper interest.

As the weather became warmer, small branches came out of the parent stem, and grew rapidly. One day as Robert and I worked in our garden, by chance he brushed his hand rudely against it. Lo, the little leaves folded themselves suddenly together, and shrunk down towards the earth; it looked abashed and frightened. "See the *Sensitive* plant!" I cried; "Robert you have killed it!" "It can't be," said Robert. We looked at it in wonder. "Let's go and tell Mamma, and ask what it means." Robert ran for her. Meanwhile I hung over the plant with the greatest curiosity; it began to stir itself again.

"It's not dead, it's only terribly frightened," I cried as Robert and mother came down the walk. Then she told us it was for this reason called the *Sensitive* plant, because it shrunk so timidly from the touch, modestly hanging down its little leaves and branches. It seems to have the power of feeling in a great degree, in this respect differing from many other plants.

As we stood and looked, the little thing raised itself up and opened its leaves; Mamma touched it again with her finger; it shrank away from her instantly. "This is queer enough," cried Robert, "I am glad the gentleman sent it." Robert was for showing it to everybody; indeed, he was never tired of trying its wonderful properties, and whether it did really feel or not was a question we talked over a dozen times a week. It was a wonder to all the children around. At length someone told us it would lose its sensitive power if we tried it too often. Henceforth we began to be very careful of it.

One day I came home from school very ill-humored. I ran through the long entry into the garden. Catching a view of Mamma at our garden, I ran across the beet beds towards her. She was handling our sensitive plant. "Oh," I cried, "you are always hurting my sensitive plant; you shan't." She looked up into my face. "The cow has been in the garden," she said, and then arose and walked away. I bent down. Behold, the print of a cow's hoof directly on the spot where it grew; one side of it was torn and broken, but the dirt had been carefully brushed off and the stalk set erect. And Mamma in her thoughtful love had gone to its help.

How had I spoken to her! How had I repaid her care! Her look of sad surprise and mild rebuke pierced my heart. I would have given anything to recall those angry words. I wanted to run and throw my arms around her neck and ask her forgiveness. Standing on tiptoe, with the tears blurring my eyes, I looked anxiously around the garden to find her. She was gone. No good opportunity came that afternoon of seeking her forgiveness, and if it had, perhaps I felt too much ashamed of my wicked conduct to speak of it. That night I lay down upon my pillow with a great weight upon my heart.

"Mamma, dear Mamma, I did not mean to," I sobbed aloud when the lamp was taken away, and it was dark. Alas, she did not hear.

During the week I tried all I could to be a dutiful, obedient child, in the hope of making up for my angry words; but they had been spoken and could not be unspoken. I remembered them, if she did not. The *Sensitive* plant never looked to me as it had done.

Twenty years passed away from that summer, and I was then away in a distant part of the land. A letter was brought to me one evening, saying that my mother was very ill. I went to my chamber with an aching heart. The thought that I might never see my mother again filled me with grief. In the night I awoke thinking of it. "Mother, dearest Mother," I cried, "would that I were near you." Then came vividly to my mind the angry, unkind words I had spoken twenty years before. It added to my sorrow; I thought of all her tender love, all the happy and beautiful hours, which we had passed together. I tried to comfort myself with thinking how happy I had made her, how much I had added to her enjoyments; but alas, it could not make up to my own heart for the angry, harsh words spoken twenty years before. I could not forget them; I could not blot them out; they came and doubled my grief. I had often remembered them before, but now they seemed sharper than a two-edged sword.

Harsh, unkind language to my mother, my dearest and best friend -she who loved me so dearly, who bore so patiently with my faults, who with such a kind and steady hand led me in right paths, who nursed me in sickness and cared for me as no one else could. I could never repay her. Even now, whenever I sit down and call to mind what a dear, good mother she has been, I weep for the sin of those wicked words. I wish I could forget them. Oh, I wish they had never been said! To this day I cannot look at a *Sensitive* plant but with sadness. Sin casts long, dark shadows on all our pleasures.

Should any children read this story, I hope they will learn a sad and solemn lesson from it. If you would not lay up in your heart sorrows for future time, which will *never* heal, be kind, obedient, respectful to your mother, to your father. At best, you can never repay their love. Strive to do what you can. Make them happy; watch your lips lest any word escape that will wound their feelings; if once said, it can never be unsaid. Always bear in mind the command given by God himself, "Honor your father and your mother."

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear.

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God...Eph. 4:29-30a

SEVENTEEN COWARDS

*Then they shall confess their sin which they have committed, and he shall make restitution...
and give it to the one whom he has wronged. Numbers 5:7*

Bill and Susan came rushing into the house. They were in such a hurry they didn't notice Father sitting in his favorite easy chair reading a newspaper. Susan hurriedly shut the door. Both Bill and Susan flopped down on the couch, breathless and scared.

Mother, hearing the door slam, came into the room.

"Whatever is the matter, children?" she asked anxiously.

"Oh, nothing," said Bill.

"Nothing," echoed Susan.

"Yes, there is," said Father, putting down his newspaper and turning to look at them.

The children looked at him in surprise.

"I can tell something is the matter by the look on your faces. What has happened?"

"Oh, well, Dad," said Bill, wriggling uncomfortably, "you see, we were all playing ball up there on that vacant lot near old Mrs. Boliger's."

"Yes, I know where it is," said Father. "I used to play on it myself when I was a boy."

"Well, Dad, the ball ..." Bill hesitated.

"I know what you are going to say," said Dad.

"The ball went through Mrs. Boliger's window."

"Well, yes, Dad. It was an accident, but how did you know?" asked Bill.

"I just guessed," said Father. "But why are you so scared?"

"I'm not really scared, Dad," said Bill, "but Mrs. Boliger is such a mean woman. She makes such a fuss about things."

"What did you do after the window was broken?"

"We ran away," Susan said.

"You ran away!" Mother exclaimed. "

"Yes," Bill said.

"How many were playing?" asked Father.

"Seventeen," said Bill.

"You mean to tell me that all 17 of you ran away, afraid of what some elderly woman might say to you?"

"Yes, Dad," said Bill, hanging his head a little.

"Well," said Father, "all I can say is that I think you were just 17 cowards, that's all."

Bill and Susan didn't like that, but they knew in their hearts that the charge was true. For a moment Bill tried to defend himself.

"But Dad, Mrs. Boliger is so cranky," he said.

"It doesn't matter how cranky she is," said Father. "If you children broke her window, you should have the courage to go and tell her you did it, and offer to pay for the damage. Why, it wouldn't have cost more than a few cents apiece. By the way, who hit the ball that broke the window?"

Bill hesitated. "Er-er-er-" he began.

"Now come on," said Father. "There couldn't have been 17 balls, nor could 17 children have smashed the window at once."

"That's right, Dad," said Bill.

"Then who hit the ball that broke the window?"

"I did," said Bill, sighing.

"I thought so," said Father, "only I wanted you to own up. And now, no matter what the others do, you both must go at once to Mrs. Boliger's, tell her you are sorry, and ask her how much the damage will cost."

"I didn't break the window," Susan cried. "I don't see why I should go."

"We couldn't," cried Bill, truly alarmed. "We simply couldn't. She is such a dreadful crank."

"But you both must," said Father sternly. "Susan, you were playing too, and are also to blame. It would be wrong to let Bill do the apologizing all by himself. The only right thing to do is to apologize. So get yourselves cleaned up, and we'll go."

"You mean you are going with us?" asked Bill.

"Yes, I am going to go with you as far as Mrs. Boliger's front gate, and then you are going to go to the door and speak to her all by yourself."

"Oh brother," Bill muttered to himself, as Susan pushed angrily passed him on the way up the stairs.

By and by the two came downstairs again, where Father was waiting for them. Mother gave an encouraging smile, as the three set out for Mrs. Boliger's. It wasn't a very happy journey. Susan scuffed at the leaves on the walk, and glared at Bill out of the corner of her eye. Bill couldn't have been more scared if he had been on his way to prison.

"Do we really have to go?" he asked after a while.

"I'm afraid you do," said Father. "There's really no other way. And you will feel a great deal happier when you have done the right thing."

Silence fell again. They walked on, the children wishing the distance might have been 20 miles so that Father would get tired and give up.

At last they turned a corner and came to the vacant lot where the accident had taken place. Mrs. Boliger's house was in full view, and so was the broken window.

"Here we are," said Father as they reached the little white gate at the entrance to Mrs. Boliger's property. "I will wait here while you go to the house and speak to her. I'll be nearby if you need me."

There was nothing else for Bill and Susan to do now but go on alone. As the children went up the path, they felt sure that Mrs. Boliger's eyes were watching them all the way.

Bill rang the bell. It sounded loud and long, like the very knell of doom.

The door opened, and there stood Mrs. Boliger, smiling. They had not expected that.

"What can I do for you?" she said kindly. "Well—er—well—er—," stuttered Bill, blushing.

"We—er—we were playing ball in the lot beside your house," began Susan.

"And I am the boy who—er—hit the ball that—er broke your window this afternoon, and I am truly sorry," Bill stammered out at last. He hesitated and then turned away a little, as though he were waiting for a bomb to explode.

But it didn't. Instead he heard a very sweet voice saying, "I'm proud of you children. I have had my windows broken this way many, many times, but you are the very first who have come to tell me about it. You are a real gentleman. And you," said Mrs. Boliger, turning to Susan, "are a real young lady. You children surely must have been brought up well. You must have wonderful parents."

"Oh," said Susan, her face wreathed in a smile now that the apology was out of the way, "that's our dad over there. He happened to come along with us."

At this, Father had to come to join them.

"You have two fine children here," said Mrs. Boliger. "You know, sir, no one has ever come here before and spoken to me like this about breaking my windows."

"Well, Mrs. Boliger," said Father, "Bill, Susan, and I would like to clean up the broken glass and pay you for putting new glass in again."

"Oh, dear," said Mrs. Boliger. "I'd hate to make you pay when none of the others have. I think I have a piece of glass."

The children beamed. "Then we will put it in for you," said Father.

They talked together as they removed the broken glass and put the new glass in place. Then they said goodbye and started for home.

"I suppose," said Father, "you children aren't sorry you went to see her?"

"Not one bit," said Bill.

"Why, she was really nice," Susan exclaimed.

"I never would have dreamed that Mrs. Boliger could be like that," Bill said. "I wonder why the boys say she is so mean? She isn't mean at all. She couldn't have been kinder or more considerate."

"Children say those things sometimes because they don't understand," said Father. "By the way, don't you feel better now that you have done the right thing, the brave thing that God would want you to do?"

"I sure do," Susan said.

"Boy, do I!" said Bill. "I could jump clear over the moon!"

"Seventeen Cowards", pp. 17-22, *Uncle Authur's StoryTime*

THE SHEEP AND THE PIG WHO BUILT A HOUSE

Retold by Carolyn Sherwin Bailey
The Book of Virtues pp. 356-357

One morning, bright and early, a sheep and a curly-tailed pig started out through the world to find a home. "We will build us a house," said the sheep and the curly-tailed pig, "and there we will live together."

So they went a long, long way, until they came to a rabbit. "Where are you going?" asked the rabbit of the two. "We are going to build us a house," said the sheep and the pig. "May I live with you?" asked the rabbit. "What can you do to help?" asked the sheep and the pig. The rabbit said: "I can gnaw pegs with my sharp teeth; I can put them in with my paws." "Good!" said the sheep and the pig. "You may come with us."

So the three went on, a long, long way farther, until they came to a gray goose. "Where are you going?" asked the gray goose of the three. "We are going to build us a house," said the sheep, the pig, and the rabbit. "May I live with you?" asked the gray goose. "What can you do to help?" asked the sheep, the pig, and the rabbit. The gray goose said: "I can pull moss, and stuff it in the cracks with my broad bill." "Good!" said the sheep, the pig, and the rabbit. "You may come with us."

So the four went on, a long, long way, until they came to a barnyard cock. "Where are you going?" asked the cock of the four. "We are going to build us a house," said the sheep, the pig, the rabbit, and the goose. "May I live with you?" asked the barnyard cock. "What can you do to help?" asked the sheep, the pig, the rabbit, and the goose. The cock said: "I can crow very early in the morning; I can awaken you all." "Good!" said the sheep, the pig, the rabbit, and the goose. "You may come with us."

So the five went on, a long, long way until they found a good place for a house. Then the sheep hewed logs and drew them. The pig made bricks for the cellar. The rabbit gnawed pegs with his sharp teeth, and hammered them in with his paws. The goose pulled moss, and stuffed it in the cracks with her bill. The cock crowed early every morning to tell them that it was time to rise.

And they all lived happily together in their little house.

THE SPIDER

On a hot summer day a gentleman sat down to think over a subject on which his mind was greatly troubled. He was wondering how it was that so many of his acquaintances had yielded to temptation, and been destroyed. He was wondering how the great tempter could so soon get them entangled in his nets, and never let them loose again, until they were ruined.

While he was thinking over the subject, he saw a worm moving softly along in the footpath. He moved quietly and without fear. "Now," said the gentleman to himself, "that poor worm can go safely, though it has no reason to guide it. There lies in wait no destroyer to entangle it, while our young men, with reason and conscience, are destroyed by scores!"

Just then he saw a spider cross the path about a foot in front of the worm. She did not appear to be thinking of the worm, nor the worm of her. When she got quite across the path she stopped and stood still. The worm kept on, but soon was brought to a stand by a small cord, too small for our eyes to see, which the spider had spun as she rushed before him.

Finding himself stopped, the worm turned to go back. The instant he turned, back darted the spider, spinning a new cord behind her. The poor worm was now brought up a second time, and twisted and turned every way to escape. He seemed now to suspect some mischief, for he ran this way and that way, and every time he turned the spider darted around him, weaving another rope.

There gradually was no space left for him, except in the direction of the hole of the spider. That was left open, but on all other sides, by darting across or around, the space was gradually growing less. It was noticed, too, that every time the worm turned toward the hole of the spider, he was instantly hemmed in, so that he could not go back quite so far as before.

So his very agony continually brought him nearer the place of death. It took a full hour to do all this, and by that time the worm was brought close to the hole of the destroyer. He now seemed to feel that he was helpless, and if he could have screamed, he doubtless would have done so.

And now the spider eyed him a moment, as if enjoying his terror, and laughing at her own skill, and then darted on him, and struck him with her fangs. Instantly the life began to flow out. Again she struck him, and the poor thing rolled over in agony and died.

Mrs. Spider now hitched one of her little ropes to her victim and drew him into her hole, where she feasted at her leisure, perhaps counting over the number of poor victims whom she had destroyed in the same way before.

When I see one disregarding his father and mother, and doing what he knows will grieve them;

When I see one occasionally going to the oyster cellar, and to the drinking saloon, in company;

When I see one going to the theater, where nothing good, but all evil, is displayed;

When I have reason to suspect that he takes money from his father or his employer, which is none of his, but which he hopes to replace—Why, I always think of the spider and her victim, and mourn that the great destroyer is weaving his meshes about every such boy, and is drawing them toward his own awful home?

STUMPED

"Bet you can't jump the creek!" Will challenged Paul.

The boys were on their way home from school, and were enjoying a lively game of *Stump the Leader*.

"Just watch me and see!" Paul took a short run—then a flying leap—and, SPLASH! The boys shouted with laughter to see their leader stumped, and a very wet Paul climbed out over the slippery rocks.

Paul laughed too, for he was a good sport. But his face grew sober as he wondered what Mother would say! Then he remembered something he had forgotten in the fun of the game they had been playing—Mother had asked him to hurry straight home that night to help her. He was the oldest of five children, and Mother often needed his help. Now today he not only would be late, but soaking wet.

So it was that a sheepish Paul slipped quickly into the kitchen and up the back stairs to his room, while his mother was in another room. "What makes you so late, Paul?" she asked a few moments later when he appeared in the kitchen again, wearing dry overalls, but with suspiciously damp hair.

"Oh, the teacher asked me to stay and wash black-boards," Paul lied.

"Why didn't you explain that Mother needed you tonight? I'm sure someone else could have helped."

At the supper table Paul could not look at his father. Somehow whenever Father's eyes were upon him he felt just miserable—it seemed as though he surely must know about the lie he had told!

"Why aren't you eating, Paul?"

"I feel sort of sick," Paul answered. It was true, too, for his guilty conscience had taken away his appetite. Excusing himself, he went upstairs and crawled into bed.

Lying in bed the words on a motto upon the wall faced him, "YOU GOD SEE ME!"

The motto had been a gift from his father a short time ago, and Paul had proudly hung it over the foot of his bed. But now the words seemed dreadful, and climbing out of bed he turned it to the wall so he could not read it!

But it did not help, for now the words were written upon his mind, "YOU GOD SEE ME"! Pulling the covers over his head wouldn't shut them out either!

Finally he could stand it no longer. Slipping out of bed he knelt and told the Lord all about the sin in his heart that he knew He had already seen. As Paul prayed, the Lord reminded him that it was for his sin He had died upon the cross, and, "He that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out"!

Paul was not ashamed of his happy tears, as believing God's Word, he received the Lord Jesus as his Savior! After a few moments he hurried down stairs to confess his lie to his mother and father, and to tell them how the Lord Jesus had saved him.

That night a happy family rejoiced together because of the words of the motto, "YOU GOD SEE ME"!

THE TEMPTATION

Two boys, both about fifteen years of age, were employed as clerks in a large grocery store. Walter Hyde was the son of an invalid widow, and his earnings were her only means of support. Andrew Strong was the eldest son of a mechanic who had quite a large family depending upon him for their daily bread.

Both the boys were capable and industrious; both were members of the temperance [sobriety] club that had been started in their church. They had but lately been employed in business.

Walter and Andrew were good friends; but they had not long been employed in the store before they learned that Mr. Bates, the proprietor, retailed alcoholic drinks.

The two boys talked together upon the wisdom of remaining at a place where liquor was sold. They had nothing to do with the sale of the liquor, but they wondered if they should work where it was sold.

"Let us talk with our folks at home," said Walter, "they will know best. I shall do what my mother says."

"I'll ask my father and mother," said Andrew. "I don't know whether they will think that I should leave, but I know they will hesitate to have me lose my job."

"Mother," said Walter Hyde, seating himself beside her easy chair, "did you know that Mr. Bates sells liquor?"

"Why, no, my son," said Mrs. Hyde, with a startled movement; "does he?"

"Yes. I did not know it for a fact until today. What do you think about my staying there? I don't have anything to do with the liquor department, but it doesn't seem exactly right to stay where it is sold."

For a moment the mother did not answer. Poverty is a hard thing to battle with, and Mrs. Hyde knew only too well what must follow the loss of her son's job. But as she pondered, there came to her mind the memory of a boy she had known in girlhood; a brave, high-spirited lad with the promise of as noble a manhood as lay before her own son. How little a thing had wrecked his hopes and brought him to a drunkard's grave.

"Lead us not into temptation." When could those words be more fitly uttered than now?

"My son, let us pray together," said this Christian mother. Together they knelt in prayer in the cheerful firelight.

"I can answer you now, Walter. I would rather starve than have you exposed to such temptations. You may tell Mr. Bates in the morning that you cannot work for him any longer."

In his home that evening Andrew Strong asked the same question of his parents.

"You say you don't have anything to do with the liquor?" questioned Mr. Strong.

"No, sir; but I am right where it is all the time. I can't help that, if I stay there."

"If we were able to get along without your wages, I wouldn't have you remain another day; but I have so many mouths to feed, and our rent is coming due. If you leave there you may not get another job in a long time. What do you think, Anna," he inquired of his wife; "had the boy better leave?"

Mrs. Strong was worried about money, so she suggested a compromise. "Let him stay a little while," she said, "until we get the rent paid, and meanwhile look up a new job for him. We won't have him remain longer than necessary."

The next day Walter Hyde resigned his position. Walter, when he found himself out of employment, did not sit down and fold his hands in discouragement, but went about looking for another job. He picked up a little work here and there. At last a gentleman, struck by his frank, manly countenance, and learning something of his history, interested himself in the

boy's behalf and got him a job as clerk in a large manufacturing establishment, a far better position than he had before.

Andrew Strong remained in the store of Mr. Bates. "It was only for a little while," said his father and mother. They intended to find him another job as soon as possible. His father made inquiries to that effect whenever he thought it advisable, but nothing turned up. At first no apparent evils resulted from his stay. Familiarity with a danger causes it to seem less dangerous, so the family finally ceased to feel troubled regarding the temptations that surrounded Andrew.

For a long time Andrew remembered his pledge and was careful to avoid the liquor department of the grocery. But as the days passed and he grew accustomed to the sight and smell of liquor, occasionally he tasted intoxicating drinks. He no longer attended the meetings of the temperance club, for after he broke his pledge he felt that he had no right to be there. He did not have the courage and resolution to confess his wrongdoing and change his ways.

Twenty years passed. In one of our large manufacturing cities, as the wealthy owner of nearly half the mills in the place was walking along the street one day, he saw a man by the roadside drunk. He stopped to see if he could not do something for the poor fellow.

"Do you know this man?" he inquired of a mill superintendent who was passing by.

"No. He is a stranger here. He came to me yesterday morning to work in the mill. I hired him, and then he told me he had been out of work so long that he had been unable to get anything to eat. I paid him for yesterday's work to help him get something to eat; but it looks as if he spent it for liquor."

"What did he tell you his name was?" inquired the factory owner.

"Andrew Strong," was the answer.

"Is it possible!" The gentleman looked long and earnestly at the tramp and then said: "Yes, it must be he." Then, turning to the superintendent, he said: "Mr. Horton, if you will help me carry this man to my house, I will do you a good turn some day."

Mr. Horton looked surprised, but he did as his employer requested.

When Andrew Strong awoke from his drunken slumber he found himself in a well-furnished room surrounded by many conveniences. Beside him sat a gentleman whom he could not recall having ever seen before.

"Where am I? What does this mean?" he demanded as his senses returned to him. "Why am I here?"

"Andrew Strong," said the stranger, "do you remember me?"

"No, I never saw you before," was the answer.

"You are mistaken. You and I were once old friends. Don't you remember Walter Hyde, who used to work with you in the store?"

"Yes, yes," was the answer, "but are you Walter?"

"I am the same boy who talked with you about leaving the store because of the liquor sold there."

The man looked with bleary eyes into the face of his companion, and after a long pause said: "Then I suppose you are the Hyde that owns all these factories."

A pause, and then came a groan from the poor drunkard. "Oh! that my father and mother had kept me from that liquor house. That is where I went down. If I had left the place as you did, I might now be an honored and respected man."

"My poor friend, do not despair," said Walter Hyde. "It is not yet too late for you to reform. I will help you."

He did help him. Andrew Strong became a man respected by his fellows and a blessing to society.

THE TEMPTING GLOVES

It was that time of year when the stores were having their special sales. The shopping center sparkled numberless signs, and their bright lights were beautifully reflected by the various wares that tempted and invited purchasers.

Many children passed to and fro—gazed with wide-open eyes at the wonderful array of pretty things—and some were induced, after long seeking, to spend the few dollars saved up for these kind of occasions.

There were parents and other friends of children standing in the well-arranged shops, buying and examining the items.

In the midst of the grown persons and children who thronged the shopping center, stood a young girl named Magdelain. She was alone, and gazed sadly, with a heavy heart, at the brilliant and beautiful array spread out on every side.

Her parents were very poor, and for this reason she worked part-time for a wealthy lady. She was employed after school running errands and in working around the lady's house. For her services she did not receive much, but what she did receive she faithfully took to her parents. Although they worked, their income was limited and they had other children in the family to feed and clothe.

On this day, Magdelain had been sent on an errand by the lady. Her destination took her to a shopping center. She would have been glad to purchase something to meet her need, yet she didn't have any money for herself.

She thought to herself, "I could give up playthings, or pretty things, if I could buy a warm dress, a shawl, or a pair of warm gloves."

Although it was near the end of November, the weather was very cold. Magdelain shivered and her teeth chattered, for her coat was very thin. She blew on her half-frozen hands and then tried to warm them in her pockets.

"I do not want cakes or candy, or dolls, or toys, but I sure want a pair of warm gloves."

She drew near to one of the shops where many articles of wearing apparel were sold. The cold wind seemed to pierce to the very bones of the poor girl, and she tremblingly drew herself together to keep warm.

On the right side of the shop, on the counter, lay a pair of warm woolen gloves, lined with soft skin. Magdelain saw them, and the longer she stood looking at them the better she liked them; they looked, too, as if they would just fit her hand.

Her gaze seemed fastened on the gloves—even from the moment she had seen them her hands felt warmer.

But she could not buy them. They were well made—they must be expensive.

Then came another thought to her mind, "I will secretly take them." The shopkeeper stood on the other side of the shop attending to a purchaser, and busily engaged in praising his goods. Magdelain stood alone, unnoticed, beside the gloves.

She thought and reflected—but the gloves were so pretty, and seemed so warm; her hands which she had drawn out of her apron, were quite stiff with frost.

Already she had stretched out her arm; already she was about to seize the gloves and rapidly conceal them. Her whole body was hot and cold by turns; her heart beat loudly; she could scarcely breathe; she trembled. Suddenly pealed out, with clear, startling tones, the sound of music from a nearby music shop.

The sound was like a voice, earnestly warning and speaking to Magdelain's heart. Quickly she drew back her arm, and the gloves lay still on the counter.

It was if her conscience had a voice. To Magdelain the solemn music seemed to say to her, "It is wrong for you to do this. You should not steal!"

Magdelain obeyed her conscience. She turned to leave the shop just as there entered a well dressed lady warmly wrapped in a expensive coat.

She examined and purchased some articles. Then she took the gloves in her hand, which had tempted Magdelain. She asked the clerk the price, and immediately purchased them. Magdelain had seen this, and was glad that the tempting gloves were now removed from her sight.

When the lady turned to leave the shop, and Magdelain recognized her. She was the lady for whom she worked.

Now, for whom had she bought the gloves? Surely not for herself. She could hardly wear them! Her mind occupied with these thoughts, Magdelain went hastily to finish the errand on which she was sent.

In returning home, Magdelain again passed through the store where she had seen the gloves. She said, as she passed the spot where she had been tempted, "Oh, what a fearful moment that was! God, I thank You, that You warned and deliver me from the danger which would have destroyed me! No! Rather I would rather be hungry and freeze than—"

"We are taking you to police station, young man! You will learn to keep your hands off! We'll soon cure you of stealing, of shop-lifting."

Magdelain was startled by these harsh words from the commotion that she happened into.

A police officer had just seized a young man and was taking him to the police station for stealing—for shop-lifting.

Magdelain left the store quickly with a beating heart and did not stop until she reached the lady's house where she worked.

As she entered the living room—Oh, what a surprise! The table was covered gifts. There were pretty and useful articles—cakes and candies, clothing, and, above all, the very gloves that she had wanted so badly.

The lady who employed her came over to Magdelain and kindly took her hand. "Dear Magdelain, you are so honest and industrious, so kind and true, and have worked for me and even served me so faithfully. Take these gifts as an expression of my gratitude. These are some special gifts to you from me. Look! All that is on the table is yours; take it all and be happy!"

Magdelain thanked her with tears of joy and surprise. However she feel very strange to be singled out for these articles by the lady she worked for. "See, here is a cap, here is a pair of shoes, here a shawl! And what do you say about these gloves? Are you happy with them? Yes, they will keep your hands very warm! Now take all these things to your parent's house—show them what you have earned by your honesty and industry."

Later that night, on her mother's neck, with sobs and tears, Magdelain told her the story of her sin and temptation and the great kindness of the lady she worked for.

Her mother said, "Be good, my child, and pray to be kept from sinful desires; then it will be well with you!" And that night, before Magdelain went to her bed, she knelt down and prayed. "Heavenly Father, lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil! Amen."

THE TWO GARDENS

"Arthur, will you lend me your knife to sharpen my pencil?" asked Mary Green of her brother, who was sitting at the opposite side of the table.

Arthur drew the knife from his pocket, and pushed it rudely toward her, saying, at the same time: "Now don't cut your fingers off."

The knife fell to the floor and Mary had trouble finding it; but her brother made no offer of assistance. He seemed engrossed in his geography lesson. At length he closed his books, exclaiming: "Well, I'm glad that lesson is learned."

"Now will you please show me how to do this example before you begin to study again?" asked Mary. She had been puzzling over a question in subtraction.

"You are big enough to do your homework, I should think," was the answer. "Let me see. What, this simple question? You must be stupid if you cannot do that. However, I suppose I must help you. Give me the pencil."

The problem was soon explained to Mary's satisfaction. Several hints given her as to those that followed prevented further difficulty. Arthur did not mean to be unkind to his sister; he loved to help her, though his manner seemed harsh and cross. Presently father sat down at the table where the children were studying.

"You are impolite, my son," he said.

"I cannot always think about manners," replied Arthur, rather rudely.

"Yet they are of great consequence, Arthur. A person whose intentions are really good, and who desires to be of use to his fellow beings, will hurt his chances of usefulness by unkind manners."

"If we do what is right, Father, I shouldn't think it matters how we do it."

"You are mistaken, Arthur. It makes a great deal of difference. This morning I visited a poor woman in the neighborhood. I couldn't help her much, but for the little that I gave her she appeared deeply grateful. Finding that she had formerly been employed as a laundress by a man whose office is near mine, I asked why she did not apply to him for help. The tears came into her eyes as she replied:

'Indeed, sir, I know he is very kind, and he has helped me before when things went hard; but he has such a harsh way of speaking. A penny with kindness is worth a dollar from those who hurt our hearts.'

"Now, my son, I know this man to be a man of principle, but he has acquired a harsh, repulsive manner, which hides his good qualities. When you were helping your sister this evening you were unkind."

"But I did not feel unkind, Father. Are not our feelings of more consequence than our manners?"

"Both are important, Arthur. It seems to me that kind feelings should produce kind manners."

Arthur thought but little more of what his father had said. He did not improve his manners, and his playfellows said of him: "Arthur Green is a goodhearted boy, but so rude and cross in his manners. One would suppose he is angry even when he is doing a favor."

Green had recently moved his family to a country home. Both Arthur and Mary liked the fresh air and the green fields. They asked their father to give them each a piece of ground for a garden and to show them how to prepare it for planting. This he agreed to do. Arthur did the most difficult work, but Mary was always ready to help. The brother and sister were fond of flowers, and looked forward to the time when they would be able to gather armfuls from their own garden. Their father gave them seeds and plants, and he helped them in the planting.

Before many days, little green leaves began to peep above the ground, and as the season advanced all the plants seemed to flourish.

"The seeds Father gave me must have been different from those he gave you," said Arthur to his sister, as they were weeding their gardens one day.

"I suppose he thought we would not want to have the same kinds of flowers," replied Mary.

"No, of course not," agreed Arthur; "but I don't like the looks of my plants as well as I do yours. The leaves are coarser, and the buds don't look as if they would make pretty flowers."

Arthur grew more and more dissatisfied as Mary's plants were covered with beautiful blossoms, while his own had either no flowers at all, or were pale and small. Having had no experience in gardening, he could not imagine the reason and complained to his father.

"I am sorry that you are not satisfied with your garden, my son," was the reply. "The seeds that I gave you were the seeds of vegetables. When I last looked at them, they seemed to be growing fine."

"Vegetables, Father!" exclaimed Arthur. "I wanted flowers. I didn't want to have a vegetable garden."

"I didn't suppose you would care for flowers, Arthur. Of what use are they?"

"They may not be of much use, Father; but they are beautiful. We like to look at them and to have them to give to our friends. Are not things useful which give pleasure?"

"I think so, my son, but you seemed to have a different opinion. In preparing your garden, I avoided giving you those plants which possess any beauty, even as you avoid cultivating what is beautiful and pleasing in your manners."

Arthur was silent. He was struck with the truth of his father's words. At length he said: "Well, Father, I will take good care of my vegetable garden this year. Every time I visit it I'll think of what you said. When you see better words and manners in me will you give me a garden that is beautiful as well as useful?"

"I will, son."

When another summer came, there had been a change in Arthur. The real kindness of his heart shone forth in his agreeable manners toward all around him. Flowers were blooming in his garden, and his father said: "These represent kindness and love."

CHARACTER POINTS: DILIGENCE,
FORBEARANCE, GRATEFULNESS, HUMILITY,
RESPECTFULNESS, RESPONSIBILITY

THE UNGRATEFUL DAUGHTER

*For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant,
revilers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy. 2 Timothy 3:2*

*Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with a promise,
That it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth. Ephesians 6:2-3*

Over ten years ago, there was a family that was quite rich. The family consisted only of a mother and her daughter. One day, while the daughter was still a baby, there was a fire in the house. The mother was outside, helplessly watching the house burn down. All her wealth turned to ashes.

Suddenly she remembered that her daughter was sleeping upstairs. Because of her love for the daughter, she rushed into the house, in spite of the fierce fire and threw her out safely.

The daughter was unharmed but the mother's hair was scorched and her whole body seriously burned. She was bedridden for several months because of her injuries. She lost all of her former attractiveness and her wealth. She was forced to do menial work, washing clothes and embroidering, to support herself and her daughter.

Eventually, however, she was able to send her daughter to school. Even though she was poor, she adorned her daughter with new clothes. One day when she was going to the place where she washed clothes, she met her daughter walking with her classmates. She called to her daughter and talked to her. Then the daughter and her classmates started to walk away.

While the mother was standing there watching her daughter's back with pride, the friends asked her daughter, "Who is that woman you talked to?" Just imagine. How could a dignified student admit that a woman with shabby clothing, a bald head, a scar-filled face, and clothes in her hands to be washed was her mother? Would she be ridiculed by others if she admitted it?

She replied, "She is my housemaid." But her mother heard this word! She could no longer continue to wash clothes. She went home, laid down on her bed, and became very sick. Later when her daughter came home, no matter how the daughter tried to comfort her mother, the mother's heart had been broken, and she could not be comforted. Who can comfort a broken heart? She remained sorrowful until she eventually died.

*Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Volume 6, pp. 782-783, Published by Living Steam Ministry,
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Note: To use this story to preach the gospel to older young children (i.e. 5th or 6^{th+} grades) see pp. 783 and 784 in Volume 6 of the *Collected Works* for Brother Nee's application of this story to the Lord's Jesus love for us and His death for us.

THE WANDERER'S PRAYER

On a cold, dreary evening in autumn, a small boy, poorly clad, yet clean and tidy, with a pack upon his back, knocked at the door of an old Quaker in the town of S, and inquired, "Is Mr. Lanman at home?"

"Yes."

The boy wished to see him, and was speedily ushered into the host's presence.

Friend Lanman was one of the wealthiest men in the country, and President of the railroad. The boy had come to see if he could obtain a situation on the road. He said that he was an orphan—his mother had been dead only two months, and he was now a homeless wanderer. But the lad was too small for the filling of any place within the Quaker's gift, and he was forced to deny him. Still he liked the looks of the boy, and said to him: "You may stop in my house tonight, and tomorrow I will give the names of two or three good men of Philadelphia, to whom you may apply with assurance of kind reception at least. I am sorry that I have no employment for you."

Later in the evening, the old Quaker went the rounds of his spacious mansion, lantern in hand, as was his custom, to see that all was safe, before retiring for the night. As he passed the door of the little chamber where the poor, wandering orphan had been placed to sleep, he heard a voice. He stopped and listened, and distinguished the tones of a simple, earnest prayer. He bent his ear nearer, and heard these words from the boy's lips:

"Oh, good Heavenly Father! Help me to help myself. Watch over me as I watch over my own conduct, and care for me as my deeds merit! Bless the good man in whose house I am sheltered for the night, and spare him ruin that he may continue sharing his bounty with the suffering ones. Amen."

And the Quaker responded with another "amen" as he moved on; and as he went, he meditated. The boy has a true idea of the duties of life. I verily think that the lad will be a treasure to his employer, he concluded.

When the morning came, the old Quaker changed his mind concerning his answer to the boy's application.

"Who taught you to pray?" inquired Friend L.

"My mother, sir," was the soft reply. And the rich brown eyes grew moist.

"And you will not forget your mother's counsels?"

"I cannot, for I know that my success in life is dependent upon them."

"My boy, you may stay here in my house, and very soon I will take you to my office."

Friend L. lived to see the poor boy he had adopted rise step by step until he finally assumed the responsible office which the failing guardian could no longer hold. And today there is no man more honored and respected by friends, and none more feared by gamblers and spectators in irresponsible stock, than is the once poor wanderer—now president of the best managed and most productive railway in the United States.

WHAT A MESS!

But all things must be done becomingly and in order. 1 Corinthians 14:40

*Do not love sleep, or else you will come to poverty; Open your eyes, and be satisfied with bread.
Proverbs 20:13*

Most of the time Franklin was alone. He would have liked some friends, but he never invited anyone home. Why?

The truth is, Franklin was too embarrassed. His family was very lazy, very messy, and very sloppy. They never, ever cleaned up. They didn't sweep, wash dishes, or make their beds. They only took baths occasionally—and then only if it was absolutely necessary!

The house was so messy it was even dangerous to walk around. Franklin was always slipping on toys that hadn't been put away. Someone in the family was always sick or hurt. Franklin's parents didn't seem to notice much. They were busy with jobs, and exhausted when not working.

Every morning Franklin got up early for school. His brothers always overslept. Then at the last minute, they would wake up and follow Franklin to school—without washing up much or eating breakfast.

At school, the children never sat by Franklin's brothers. They were so untidy, even dirty and, well, a little smelly. Franklin often wished his brothers would change a little, but his brothers didn't seem to care.

One day all the children in class had to paint a picture. They could paint whatever they liked. Franklin decided to paint a pretty rainbow. He worked hard at it.

When it was finished, Franklin's rainbow was the most beautiful painting in the whole class. The teacher held it up for everyone to see, and then she pinned a beautiful ribbon on it—first prize!

Franklin wasn't used to this kind of attention. He was a little shy. "It really is not that good," he stammered. But deep down he was happy to have won the honor.

"I wonder what my parents will say," he thought as he carried his picture home.

To Franklin's delight, his family was impressed.

"Look at this! We've got a real Rembrandt in our family!" cried his father with pride.

"This is the loveliest rainbow I have ever seen!" added Franklin's mother.

Grandfather nodded and quietly said that this picture was a true masterpiece.

"Hang it up on the wall over there!" demanded his father.

"Oh, I don't know..." Franklin tried to say.

But his father insisted. "Don't be shy, Son. This picture deserves to be seen by everyone!"

When the picture was on the wall, Franklin stepped back. "Do you think," he said quietly, "it would look nicer if the wall was a bit cleaner?"

"Maybe so, Son," Father said. "Maybe you are right. Let's give it a try and wash the wall."

And Franklin's father began to scrub the dirty wall with lots of soap and water.

"Look!" he noticed. "There is wallpaper underneath!"

"And what a pretty design!" added Franklin's mother.

After the job was done, Franklin said, "Thank you for cleaning the wall. The picture really looks much better now."

"Well, such a fine painting deserves a fine place to hang!" said Franklin's father. "But now that the wall is clean, it's a shame the floor is so messy. Maybe we should do something about this."

"Here, let me do it," interrupted Grandmother. "I have intended to take a mop to this old floor, but have just not gotten around to it. Now I have a good reason to get started."

And she cleaned and scrubbed and waxed that floor until it shined!

After that, the whole family agreed that the prize-winning painting looked even better in its shiny clean surroundings.

“But the curtains!” said Franklin’s mother. “We nearly forgot the curtains. We can’t leave them dirty. I must wash them, too.” So she took them down from the windows and carried them to a big basin on the porch in the backyard.

Washing those curtains took a lot of soap and water. A lovely soft white foam rose from the basin and spilled bubbles over the sides.

It looked so tempting that suddenly the whole family wanted to go inside and take a bubble bath. “Us first!” said Franklin’s brothers.

They spent the whole afternoon in the tub, splashing and playing, singing and laughing. Eventually, though every member of the family got their bubble bath. They all felt so squeaky clean!

Franklin began to feel much better about his family. Soon he even invited some of his schoolmates to come over. His mother served them cookies and his father found an old harmonica and began to play songs.

Grandfather joined in a few games, too. Before they left, Franklin’s friends told him, “Your family is the best!”

Franklin had to agree.

From then on, life was much happier for Franklin and his family. With his parent’s encouragement, Franklin took painting lessons and his talent blossomed. His mother, his father, his grandfather, even his brothers managed to keep the house—and themselves—clean and tidy.

(An adaptation of a story by Hans Wilhelm)

WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

What is God like? If you want to know, listen to this story.

Once upon a time there was a little boy. Let's call him Johnny. Johnny was always coming home late from playing outside.

One day his mom and dad had had enough of it. They said, "Listen, Johnny! You never come home in time for supper. Your supper is always getting cold. We always have to warm it up for you. This has got to stop. Next time you come home late, we'll give you bread and water. That's all. No butter, no peanut butter, no jam. Just plain bread and water."

Well, the next day Johnny came home late for supper again. He walked into the house and sat down at the supper table. His mom and dad, who had plates with meat and potatoes and vegetables in front of them, didn't say a thing. They quietly gave Johnny a plate with some bread and a glass of water.

Johnny was crushed. He never thought his mom and dad would do such a thing. How could they? But he was wrong.

Johnny's father waited for the lesson to sink in. Then, silently, he took his own plate full of meat and potatoes and vegetables, and put it in front of Johnny. Then he took Johnny's plate and put it in front of himself.

Johnny is now a man. Not too long ago Johnny said, "Do you know what God is like? I've known it all my life. I've known it ever since that night when my father switched plates." That's a true story. It really happened.

From *HLIGN* by John Timmer. Zondervan Publishing, 1997.

WISE AS SOLOMON

Have you ever heard someone say, “That person has the wisdom of Solomon”? Solomon, the son of King David in the Bible, was one of the wisest kings of Israel. So when people say, “She has the wisdom of Solomon,” they mean to say, “She is very, very wise.”

Not many people are that wise, but the judge in our story was. He had the wisdom of Solomon. Listen!

Once upon a time there was a rich man. One day he lost his wallet. It had two thousand dollars in it. The rich man was desperate. Two thousand dollars is a lot of money—even for a rich man.

The rich man put an ad in a newspaper. It said:

**LOST: A WALLET WITH TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS.
REWARD: FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS.**

Now it so happened that a poor man found the wallet. He read the ad and quickly returned the wallet to the rich man. As he handed over the wallet, he held out his hand to receive the five-hundred-dollar reward.

But the rich man thought, *Five hundred dollars is a lot of money, way too much money for this poor man.* So he asked the poor man, “Where is the diamond that was in the wallet?”

The poor man answered, “Diamond? What do you mean? There was no diamond in your wallet.”

“Oh, yes, there was!” the rich man said. “And you took it. That's why I'm not giving you the five-hundred-dollar reward.”

The poor man went to the town judge, who had the wisdom of Solomon, and told how he had been cheated.

The judge asked both the rich man and the poor man to appear in court. The judge said to the rich man, “You said your wallet had two thousand dollars and a diamond in it. There is no diamond in this wallet, so this is not your wallet. Therefore, I will let this poor man keep this wallet with two thousand dollars in it until he finds the person who lost it. Meanwhile, rich man, you keep looking for the wallet you lost with the diamond in it.”

I tell you, the rich man changed his mind in a hurry and quickly gave the poor man the five hundred dollar reward.

From *HLIGN* by John Timmer, Zondervan Publishing, 1997.